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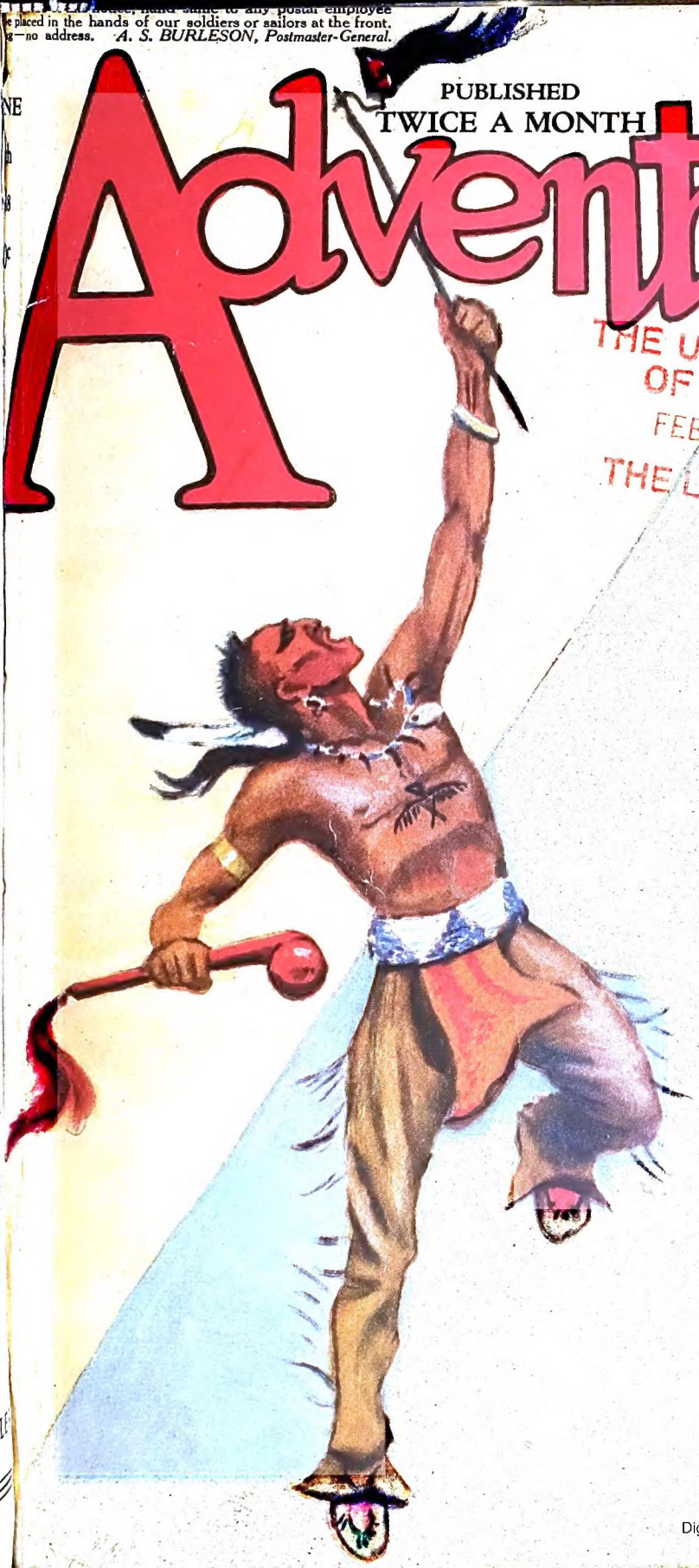

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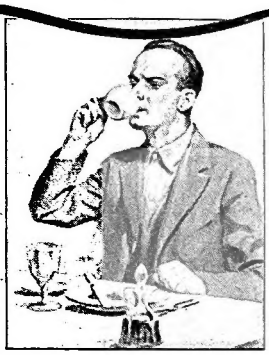

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Adventure

VOLUME 17
NUMBER 6
JUNE 18 1918

The White Indians

A COMPLETE NOVEL

by KATHRENE & ROBERT PINKERTON

Authors of "The Trail of the Black Fox", "On Guard", etc.

CHAPTER I

A DOUBLE-BARRELED EXPEDITION

MORE than one seeker for dry facts forgot the object of his search when Georgia Temple entered the library. As she passed the tables every head went up, but Georgia did not see. She went directly to the card index and in ten minutes had a long list of numbers.

There was a swift intentness in her movements that no mere desire for knowledge could have stimulated. Her face was flushed, her eyes were bright and eager. Her fur coat fell in a forgotten heap behind her chair and remained there as she walked quickly to the desk. Any psychologist cold-blooded enough to ignore the striking beauty of the girl would have seen that knowledge as knowledge did not interest her then, might even have deducted the fact that adventure, romance and mystery absorbed her attention to the exclusion of all else.

"I'm sorry," said the desk attendant as he handed back her slip. "Every one of those books was called for a few minutes ago."

"That same list!" exclaimed Georgia. "What? Who? I don't understand." Then suddenly—"Who has the books?"

"The young man with his back to the second window."

"I'll wait," she decided.

Georgia chose a chair facing the second window. For a time she centered her interest in a newspaper she had brought with her. Then she stole a glance at the young man who had the books, only to find him watching her.

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He looked down immediately and Georgia studied him openly. Had she known of the incongruity of her own presence in the reference room she would have felt that his was equally so. He was tall. His shoulders were wide, his arms long. His hair was brown, his eyes dark. At any other time Georgia would have thought of him as being exceedingly good-looking.

But the thing that caught her attention, that made him stand out in the score of white-faced, round-shouldered, bespectacled men and women in the room was his complexion. It was not the even brown of the hatless athlete. It was too dark, too thoroughly baked in. Had Georgia's experience been wide enough she might have suspected that only a life spent entirely in the open could have caused so deep a coloring, that only the Spring sun of the far North could have so fixed the pigmentation, that only the searing winds of white, treeless wastes could have so mottled his skin with healing patches over deep frost-bites.

After half an hour Georgia arose and, pretending to search among the shelves along the wall, walked past the young man. As she glanced at the books heaped on the table before him she stopped as if petrified. Beside them was a copy of the same morning paper she had brought, and it was folded to the same article she had been reading.

Georgia returned to her seat, no longer impatient. The identity of the call slips, the two papers folded and creased to the same article, had presented a problem she must solve. At last she asked the attendant if he knew the name of the young man.

"Whitney, I think he said. Yes, Whitney, Donald Whitney. He is a stranger here and I remember the name because he seemed so unfamiliar with the method of obtaining reference works and introduced himself. I'm sure he'll let you have some of the books. I'll ask him."

"Please don't," said Georgia as she started away.

She walked across the room to the tanned young man.

"I beg your pardon," she said, "but could I have some of the books you have called for. I'll return them whenever you wish."

Blushing beneath the tan, he shoved back his chair and jumped to his feet.

"Take them all!" he exclaimed. "It's not important, my having them."

"Not at all," answered Georgia. "I'll take a few and later we can exchange."

He wanted to speak, but the girl interrupted.

"It's awfully good of you. I'll take these, thank you," and she was gone.

For two hours Georgia was too busy to see that the young man had lost interest in his books and much of the time was frankly staring at her. She glanced quickly through the books, made notes, at last returned them and received a dozen more. This time he showed a determination to speak, but Georgia, fearing that a mutual interest in the same subject might be the topic of conversation, cut him off with a polite appreciation of his generosity and was gone.

It was long after luncheon time when the girl arose, her notebook filled. The tanned youth had gone, but as she went out of the room she met a gray, wizened old man.

"Oh, Professor Ames!" she cried. "Did you see the Larson letter in the morning paper?"

"How do you do, Miss Temple," he answered quickly. "I beg your pardon. I didn't see you. Yes, quite a remarkable thing if true. It is so provoking to have a man practically on the spot and not investigate."

"But Larson isn't an ethnologist and you should be grateful even for his writing that letter to a friend. To even suggest that there could be such a tribe is something. Can you imagine that there can be a band of savages who have never seen white men and yet in whose veins flows the blood of white men who visited this continent a thousand years ago? Think of their living up there in a little corner of the world all their own, never molested, never seen, and yet perhaps retaining traces of the Norse language, Norse customs, Norse legends. It's the most remarkable thing I ever heard of."

"If it is true its scientific value is great," replied Professor Ames. "I wish it might be investigated. However, I can't see where the funds would come from."

"Then you think it is possible?" asked the girl. "You think that there may be a tribe of Indians living in the north end of this continent who have Norse blood in

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their veins, some of whom actually have brown hair and blue eyes?"

"It's possible, of course, but highly improbable, and that is why Larson should have investigated, instead of sending out a bare mention of Eskimo rumors in that letter. That was written a year ago, and now he is probably five hundred miles north and west."

"But why improbable, Professor?" asked Georgia. "The Norse strain could have persisted through a thousand years."

"Yes, but there are no records of the Norsemen having entered Hudson's Bay. We know they saw the Eskimos and we feel certain that they saw Indians, but that was undoubtedly as far south as Newfoundland or the New England coast. The head of Chesterfield Inlet is nearly a thousand miles from the east coast of Baffin's Land, which is as far west as the Norsemen went. Another thing, there are no Indians so far north as Chesterfield Inlet. The Indians and Eskimos are hereditary enemies and Chesterfield Inlet is strictly Eskimo territory. I'm afraid we will have to class Larson's report among the legends."

Professor Ames started on. Georgia called to him.

"Do you know of any one interested in ethnology by the name of Whitney, Donald Whitney?" she asked.

"Never heard of him," was the reply.

Georgia obtained a city directory. There were two Donald Whitneys, one a bookkeeper, the other a street-car conductor.

"HELLO, dad!" she cried when she burst into the library at home. "I have the greatest news, and the worst. I met Professor Ames in the Crerar Library and he says the report should be investigated, but that he doesn't see where the funds are coming from."

"That's fine!" interrupted her father enthusiastically. "The greatest authority in the country indorses the idea. If he thinks an expedition is out of the question we have a clear field. We'll get there first. We'll find the 'white Indians.' "

"I don't know about that," answered Georgia. "When I asked for a list of books on that country and about Indians in the far North, I found the same list had been asked for."

"Who?" demanded Mr. Temple.

"A Mr. Whitney, Donald Whitney."

"Did you talk with him?"

"Only to ask him for some of the books," she replied.

At the breakfast table that morning she had convinced her father that his opportunity had come, that he no longer need be a retired wholesale hardware dealer playing with ethnology, but a real investigator, a man who had contributed something of great value and interest to his science.

Georgia's task had not been difficult for Mr. Temple himself had begun to see that, after five years, he was not considered as being anything more than a man with a hobby and a bank account.

But Georgia's purpose had been twofold. She not only wanted her father to succeed in something in which he was deeply interested, to win happiness through personal achievement, but she wanted an opportunity for her brother.

Her father's patience with Rollin was near exhaustion, largely because he could not understand the temperament of the young architect whose brilliant future was being clouded by alcohol, but also because he could not understand that alcoholism becomes a disease, not a question of willpower.

With Rollin on board a ship or working in the far North for nine months or more there was hope for him, Georgia knew. He would get the chance he needed, the chance he could not have in Chicago or anywhere else in civilization.

Perhaps unconsciously, Georgia sought something else in the expedition. She had interested herself in her father's hobby, ethnology. She had devoted herself as much as possible to Rollin, had acted as buffer between him and her father. Motherless herself, she had been mother to her brother and companion to her father. She did not know it, but she had denied herself things that she might have had.

Now she saw the possibilities for romance in this voyage, mystery in the strange legend of the tribe they were to seek, adventure in the land to which they were going. When she arose it had been with the same prospects as any other morning. Now the whole world was new. It beckoned, it lured.

Dr. David Baird was at the Temple dinner-table that night. Georgia, Rollin and their father constantly sought his

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advice on any topic. No family decision was ever reached without the aid of the middle-aged physician. The proposed sub-Arctic expedition failed to bring forth his approval until Rollin was mentioned. Then he favored it whole-heartedly.

"What a chance for him!" he exclaimed. "Of course he'll go. It's the thing he wants most."

"How about sending him off on a trip like that without competent medical advice, David?" asked Mr. Temple. "Is it wise? Haven't you always said that the help had to come from without, that there must be a treatment as for any disease?"

"By all means, yes."

Mr. Temple looked at Georgia questioningly. She was leaning back in her chair, weary from a strenuous, exciting day. It was a new thought to her, a matter to which she had given no attention whatever, and now, without thinking, without counting the cost, tired and instinctively seeking masculine support, she turned her eyes toward David Baird.

The physician, as usual, was looking at her. He caught the question, the appeal, the quick, mute, involuntary plea.

"Yes," he said quietly, "I'll go."

"But David!" cried Georgia, shocked to protest by this quick answer to her unconscious request. "It's not fair. You can't leave your work in the laboratory. You mustn't think of it."

"I need a rest and a change," he replied evenly. "It will do me good. And I'd like to help Rollin."

Suddenly the room began to swim about Georgia's head. She looked at David, at the homely but strong and confidence-compelling face, the long, ungainly body but above all the serious, kindly eyes that now for the first time seemed to ask a question.

Many times Georgia had instinctively gone to David for help in little things, for advice in big things. They had worked together over Rollin, for they shared a great affection for the lovable, hapless youth. They alone understood him. They had rejoiced together over his first triumphs as one of the city's brilliant young architects.

It was to David that Georgia went when first she discovered the weakness which was destroying Rollin's power and threatening the ruin of their hopes for the future. It was to David alone that Georgia could have criticized her father's treatment of her brother or have admitted that it was partly the father's attitude that had made impossible the foundation for the same strong tie between father and son that existed between father and daughter. And Georgia knew that it was the faith and understanding of David Baird that had enabled Rollin to make even the unsuccessful fight that he had against his temptation.

But now she had gone to David for help in a big thing, had asked unconsciously that he make a big sacrifice. The sacrifice was equally in the interests of Rollin and her father, but she knew perfectly well that it had been her mute appeal alone that had decided him. She had asked and he had obeyed simply because he was her lover.

No woman could have escaped the purpose of David Baird's continued presence in the Temple home. It had begun when the girl was still in short dresses. It had continued through college and the days as accepted mistress of her father's home, had become as familiar and as commonplace as the gray line of Lake Michigan stretching across the open front door.

Perhaps this very familiarity and its long duration had prevented consideration of the real situation, of a condition which now thrust itself upon the girl with stunning force. A sudden wave of tenderness engulfed her. Tears in her eyes, she arose, crossed swiftly to his chair and leaned over him.

"Thank you, David dear," she whispered.

Her lips touched the tousled, gray-streaked hair on the top of his head. He felt the warm exhalation of a fleeting kiss. The next moment Georgia was gone.

CHAPTER II

THE JOHN BARLEYCORN REEF

FROM the beginning both Georgia and her father had sought secrecy in their plans, had hoped to be alone in the discovery of what they had come to term the "white Indians." The presence of Donald Whitney in the Crerar Library, his interest in the same subject, caused deep disappointment.

David Baird, at dinner the second night, however, scoffed at the idea of Whitney going in search of the tribe.

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"I know who he is," he announced. "His father was a Board of Trade man who died several years ago. Whitney never hunted for anything except big game. He lives at the Illinois Athletic Club. As I understand it, he's shot everything there is to be shot on this continent and on one or two others."

"But he had Larson's letter," objected Georgia, "and he had an old book by an explorer for the Hudson's Bay Company in which there was mention of the strange band of Indians and of the ruins of a stone village which they are said to visit every Summer. He drew a map showing where the village was, near the head of Chesterfield Inlet. I wouldn't have found that book if Mr. Whitney hadn't had it."

"That's the most important thing we have to work on, more important than Larson's letter, even if it is a hundred years old," said Mr. Temple.

The next day Mr. Temple discovered that Whitney had left the day before for Edmonton, Alberta.

"After musk-ox," he had said.

"That leaves us a clear field," Mr. Temple announced at the dinner-table.

"But why did he have those books and Larson's letter?" persisted Georgia.

"He can't be after them," said Dr. Baird. "Edmonton is over at the foot of the Rockies. A man wouldn't go that way to reach Hudson's Bay."

"Certainly not," said Mr. Temple. "We have a clear field. And be careful, both of you, not to let this get out."

Every night found Dr. Baird at the Temple dinner-table, which became a clearing house for information on sub-Arctic exploration. He was not a practising physician. There was an income from his father's estate sufficient to permit him to devote his entire attention to his greatest interest, research work.

Rollin, too, appeared nightly. He was an agreeable companion, lovable in the eyes of his friends and family. Youth, good looks, a careless poise, and above all a wholesomeness strong enough to rise above the influence and effects of alcohol, these were the qualities his friends remembered even in the face of the thing that made him little less than notorious.

Rollin's drinking was of the deceptive sort. Many strangers had considered him merely an agreeable, entertaining companion when in reality he had no recollection of his actions. Always on his feet, always with a fluent tongue, clear-eyed until the final, quick collapse of a debauch, he had been able to accomplish things which had become memorable among his acquaintances.

The Rollin of the first month of the preparations for the expedition was an entirely different person, however. His usual light-heartedness was strangled by the grip he kept upon himself, by the constant struggle he waged. He sat at the table, silent, almost moody, rarely taking part in the conversation, displaying only a perfunctory interest in the planning.

One night when the conversation had dwelt entirely upon the old Norse sagas, which Georgia had been searching for clues to their white Indians, Rollin suddenly became voluble.

"No wonder you know them by heart," he laughed as he looked across the table at his sister. "You might have stepped right out of the frame of one. Isn't that right, David? Look at her! Wouldn't she have made a smashing queen of the Vikings?"

Her eyes were blue, her skin a rosy tint, and backing the exquisite picture were great masses of flaxen hair. She was tall, athletic, and adding to each feature of her beauty was a complete healthiness of body and wholesomeness of spirit.

But Georgia's pleasure in her brother's remark was instantly forgotten as he rattled on facetiously about sagas and Vikings in general. She glanced uneasily at David, who nodded slightly.

After dinner Rollin slipped away. David spent a week in the search, while work in his laboratory, to which he had devoted months of preparation, was ruined in his absence.

"Why don't you give up?" demanded the young man savagely when he was himself again in David's rooms. "You've done your best and, while you people may not believe it, I've done mine."

This was the mood David had dreaded most and it required all his influence to persuade Rollin to return to the family dinner-table.

The preparations went on, grimly now on the part of Georgia and even her father, who seemed to have adopted a new attitude toward his son, who appeared to be staking everything on the expedition.

Mr. Temple spent much time in laying a

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foundation for his researches, but his business ability was devoted to the more practical features of the preparations. Georgia spent all her time aiding him, assumed responsibility for all the details and, so well did they plan, April first found them with every arrangement completed.

The *Anywhere*, a converted sealer, had been leased from Mark Shattuck, a millionaire sportsman who had fitted it out for a trip after polar bear, and its equipment was so complete there was little to supply except fuel for the gasoline motor, a new set of spare sails, coal for a possible Winter in the North and food for nearly two years.

"Shattuck even had a talking machine and a thousand records for the crew in the forecastle," reported Mr. Temple upon his return from Boston, where the ship lay. "He really has robbed us of the pleasure of outfitting. I could hardly find a thing to buy."

"How about a crew?" asked David.

"I got the man who commanded the ship when Shattuck made his trip," said Mr. Temple. "He is Captain Walter Hewitt. I couldn't do any better than leave the selection of the crew in his hands."

"Then we are ready a month ahead of time," said Georgia.

"In everything except a better foundation for our researches," answered her father. "The more I investigate the more I fear that Larson has reported on a myth. If there was only something from the other end, something from the Norse side of it, to give us a suggestion that the people from Iceland ever went so far west. Nothing even in their myths gives us a hint of their entering Hudson's Bay and crossing to the west shore."

"Wait!" cried Georgia eagerly as she arose from the table. "I found a new saga this afternoon."

She went to the library and returned with a book.

"It's the saga of Snorri Gellison," she said as she turned the leaves. "He lived in Iceland and was outlawed, as so many were. He claimed he was unjustly treated and said he would go away with his people but that Saga, the goddess—this was before Christianity was introduced into Iceland—had come to him in his sleep and promised that he would find a new country beyond Vinland and that his people would grow strong and later would return, with Saga riding on the bow of their largest ship, and punish those who had caused their banishment.

"Snorri and his people sailed in two ships. Some one asked him if he were going to Greenland, and he said, 'No, beyond.' They asked if he were going to Helluland, which is supposed to have been Baffin's Land, and he said, 'No, beyond.' They asked if he were going to Markland, which is supposed to have been Labrador, and he said, 'No, beyond that.' They asked if he were going to Vinland, and he answered, 'No, beyond that.' The saga says that Snorri's ships sailed away but that they never returned with the Goddess Saga sitting on the bow of the largest, and that nothing was ever heard of them again."

She paused a moment to see if her father's delight confirmed her belief in the value of her discovery. He was looking at her, too fascinated to speak, his eyes alight with imaginative speculation. She went on excitedly:

"You know those people had little idea of the geography of the places they visited. Wasn't it possible for Snorri to have sailed to Greenland and then, following the usual directions, on past to Helluland, or Baffin's Land, through Hudson Straits and right on, instead of turning south to find Markland and Vinland? Such a course would have taken him straight across Hudson's Bay and into Chesterfield Inlet."

"And there they built the stone village," interrupted her father, "the one the Hudson's Bay Company explorer mentioned, and became the progenitors of the white Indians. Girl, you've found just what I've wanted, have been looking for. With that saga and what we will find in Chesterfield Inlet, we are to make a discovery that will be a seven-day wonder."

THE next day David was responsible for a sudden change in their plans. He had seen that Rollin was hanging on to himself with difficulty and spoke of it to Georgia and her father. Two days later they were on their way east and in four days were making themselves at home on the *Anywhere*, a tubby, unattractive but competent looking vessel without but comfortably furnished below decks.

Captain Hewitt, who had been informed of the change in plans by telegraph, met the party on deck.

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"All ready, Captain?" was Mr. Temple's first question.

"Except a crew," was the somewhat ungracious response. "You told me May first, or later, and I was counting on the crew of a vessel due here the middle of the month."

"But surely there are sailors around Boston you can get," protested David.

"Sailors, yes, but not the sort of men I want for this work. I want men who have been North before, men who have shown they can stand a long siege of it if necessary. Besides, there is no use in getting away so soon. We'll only have to wait around up North for the straits to open."

Mr. Temple took the captain's arm and started down the deck with him. In a few moments they returned.

"I'll show you to your quarters," said the captain. "Then I'll get busy among the docks and boarding-houses to see what I can find."

In the afternoon two men came aboard, Joe Brandt, cook, and Ed Garst, seaman, each bearing a note from Captain Hewitt. But the captain was unable to find any more and left immediately after dinner to search the water-front.

In the evening the four members of the Temple party went on deck. Despite the irritation caused by the lack of a crew there was a certain satisfaction in being on board. The great adventure had begun. There was the smell of the sea and of shipping from foreign lands in the air. The bare rigging of sailing vessels and the thick funnels of tramp freighters were silhouetted against the golden glow of the sky above the city.

All four seemed to feel the spell and little was said as they leaned against the rail. To Georgia more than the others, perhaps because of her youth and the susceptibility of her sex to the romantic, there was an intoxication in the very feel of the deck beneath her feet. The shadowy outlines about her were suggestive of the mysteries they were about to penetrate. The sea in which their ship floated was the same as that in which the Norsemen, reckless, adventurous, sailed away into the unknown.

The sounds and smells and shadows about her vivified the saga of Snorri Gellison, made of it for the first time something other than a legend. A thousand years were swept aside and she saw them, not as story people, but as real, live, human beings. The pathos and tragedy of their fate, the mystery of their voyage, the final abandonment of hope and the gradual assimilation by the savage tribe, these for the first time struck Georgia in their human aspects.

And into that same barren, desolate, hopeless land they were going. The story that had died a thousand years before was to be uncovered. The village in which the first hopes had been born, in which the last despairful wail had echoed, was to be found. The people among whom traces of the Viking strain had persisted through so many centuries were to be seen.

For the moment Georgia forgot entirely the scientific aspects of the voyage. Adventure and romance drove them out. She felt that she had turned back the pages of centuries, even that she was gazing out over the waters that surround Iceland.

The spell was broken by her father's matter-of-fact announcement that he was going below to write some final business letters. A little later Rollin followed.

"It can't be true that we are really going to start, after all these months of planning," the girl exclaimed as she and David started down the deck together.

The relief and reaction after the long Winter of preparation had released her spirits, even in the face of the delay occasioned by the lack of a crew. It was one of the first opportunities David had had of seeing Georgia alone and he, too, now that the start was really made and the laboratory and its work were behind him, felt the buoyant effect of responsibilities lifted. For an hour they strolled about the deck or leaned against the rail, talking light-heartedly, aimlessly, reveling in the very novelty of chatter.

Suddenly David wheeled about and started toward the companionway.

"I've forgotten Rollin," he said.

"He wouldn't—wouldn't go ashore?" asked Georgia anxiously as she hurried after him.

He ran down the steps. Georgia waited a few minutes and then descended to the main cabin. David had just come from the galley.

"He's not anywhere below decks," he said as he crossed to the companionway. "I'm going to look for him up above."

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He sprang up the steps, Georgia in pursuit. In the darkness the girl could hear him going forward on the starboard side. She took the other and they met at the forecastle.

"He's gone," announced David briefly.

"You mean he has left the ship, is going to start drinking?"

"Exactly," replied the physician savagely, "and it is all my fault. I shouldn't have left him."

CHAPTER III

SPANISH TREASURE

TWO days went by and there was no word of Rollin. David did not return to the ship. Mr. Temple aided in the search and wired a detective agency in Chicago to be on the lookout for his son in his usual haunts. Georgia, with the added irritation of her inability to help, remained on board. Captain Hewitt spent the first day in his search for a crew and then was pressed into the quest for traces of Rollin.

Three days passed and there was no word. At the end of the fourth David returned to the ship, haggard, despondent. One glance at his face told of the effort he had made, of his disappointment, of his fear of the consequences.

Georgia, her father and Captain Hewitt were on deck when David appeared. For a few minutes they stood leaning against the rail, waiting for the call to dinner. Nothing was said. Nothing could be said or done. The lack of a crew was forgotten, even the white Indians themselves were not considered in the face of this latest catastrophe.

Joe Brandt thrust his head through the companionway.

"Dinner is ready," he announced shortly and ducked back.

Slowly Georgia turned, then the others. As the girl took her first step down the stairs there was a hail from the shore, and the four turned.

Coming along the dock arm in arm with a huge, heavily-bearded seaman was Rollin. He waved enthusiastically when the group saw him and shouted something which they did not catch.

Georgia, her father, David and Captain Hewitt rushed to the gangplank, the doctor, in his relief and excitement, hurrying on down to the dock.

"Hello, folks," greeted Rollin as he came nearer. "I've solved your problem for you. It took some time, but I got a crew. Let me present our first officer, Mr. Julius Volberg. Mr. Volberg," and he stopped and waved to those above him, "my sister, my father, Doctor Baird and Captain Hewitt."

To all outward appearances Rollin was perfectly sober, but his family and David recognized his condition at once. Their relief was so great, however, that they welcomed him joyously and, at his command, shook hands with the seaman who accompanied him.

Captain Hewitt, however, was not so cordial.

"Let me see your papers," he commanded gruffly.

Volberg, upon whom the others could not detect signs of drinking, reached into the breast-pocket of his coat, selected an envelop and handed it to the captain.

"Oh, I say, Chief, he's all right!" exclaimed Rollin when Captain Hewitt began to read the document carefully. "And there isn't an iceberg in Baffin's Bay or that ever came down the coast of Greenland that Volberg hasn't been on. And best of all, he has an entire crew that we can have for the asking."

"And good men they are for Arctic waters, too, sir," added Volberg, speaking for the first time. "Every one of them has been on the last two voyages with me, and some of them as many as four."

"Whaling?" asked Captain Hewitt.

"Twice, and since then two years with a millionaire who was after polar bears and musk-ox, and the last two years with a land expedition in the Gulf of Boothia."

"With Woodward on the *Polar Bear*, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"But the *Bear* came back last Christmas," said the captain. "Haven't you had a berth since, and have your men been idle?"

"It was nearly four years straight, sir," answered Volberg, "and they thought they were entitled to a stay ashore. They're a quiet lot, sir, and hang on to their pay."

"Isn't that fortunate!" cried Georgia, who, with the others, had been listening to the questioning.

"Huh!" grunted Captain Hewitt. "Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. Can you have your men on board at eight o'clock?"

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"Yes, sir," answered Volberg.

"And you have a gas-engine man among them?"

"A good one, sir."

"Do it then, and I'll talk to them and to you."

"Am I not the savior of this expedition?" demanded Rollin as they descended the companionway. "But I tell you folks, it was hard work finding that crew."

There were no remonstrances, no reproofs, for the young man. Every one in the party was too glad to have him back, and, though each knew full well the reason for his levity at the dinner-table, they laughed at his sallies and made the meal a merry one.

Only David Baird, who understood Rollin and his condition most thoroughly, was alarmed. The physician watched his friend closely, sometimes anxiously. Captain Hewitt, who had seen only the tense, quiet Rollin of the first meal on shipboard, and who could find no evidences of drink in the young man's manner or conversation, stared in amazement at first and then joined in the laughter.

"What do you think of the mate I dug up for you, Captain?" Rollin asked.

"He may be good, and he may not," was the rather short answer. "His papers are all right and he has had the sort of experience he should have for such a voyage."

"Then there can't be any doubt of it, can there?" asked Georgia.

"You never can tell about a crew on an Arctic voyage until you have been out with them, miss," was the answer. "It's different than anything else. It lasts a long time, and there are hardships, of a sort. Few men fancy such berths and they have to be the right sort to stick through it well."

"But these men of Volberg's certainly have stuck through it on more than one similar voyage," said Mr. Temple. "You know, Captain, we want to get away as quickly as possible. Woodward's trip was certainly a hard one."

"I tell you, sir," said the captain frankly, "if they suit me I'll take them, and I'll make some allowances, sir, so that we may get out of here as quickly as possible."

At eight o'clock Volberg appeared on deck with seven men. Captain Hewitt, with an apology to Mr. Temple, took them into the cabin.

"I want to see each one in a good light," he explained in a whisper.

The entire party gathered for the examination, which was brief. Captain Hewitt looked at each man closely, put a query or two and then sent them on deck.

"You, too, Mr. Volberg, for a minute, please," he said.

When the last step was heard on the companionway all turned to the captain.

"I can't find anything the matter," he said shortly. "I'll take the lot. Shall we sail in the morning, sir?"

"By all means!" cried Mr. Temple joyfully. "Tonight if you wish."

"I don't want to alarm you," explained the captain rather diffidently. "Maybe it's just because I'm a crank on such things, and maybe it's only part of a sailor's superstition, but I don't like sailing on such a voyage with a strange crew."

"Nonsense, Captain!" protested Mr. Temple. "They didn't look like pirates. I'd trust them."

"It isn't that, sir. It's the Northern seas. You never know what they will do even to a good man. But it's a go. I'm getting to be an old fool. . . Mr. Volberg," he called.

The mate came down the companionway and stood at the door.

"Can you get your men aboard tonight?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. We will sail in the morning."

Whatever the doubts of Captain Hewitt, they were not shared by the others. They sat about the table in the main cabin, and talked enthusiastically of the morning. To all except Rollin there had come an exhilarating relief. That young man continued in his effervescent mood for a time. Then he began to shift uneasily in his seat, to glance quickly about the table.

David, at these first evidences of a growing desire for more alcohol, led Rollin to the stateroom which they shared jointly. Long after the others had gone to sleep, long after the new crew had come aboard with a thudding and scraping of sea-chests dragged along the deck, the doctor sat up with his patient, administering whisky in small portions at first and finally opiates until Rollin fell asleep.

WHEN DAVID wakened he knew at once he was at sea. His vigil of the night before, added to his long search through Boston, had exhausted him more than he knew, and it was afternoon before

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he arose. Rollin still slept, a fact the physician reported to Georgia when he found her in the main cabin.

"It's begun at last, his chance, hasn't it?" said the girl.

"Yes, only it's going to be too easy. Why, our mode of travel is almost luxurious. I rather hoped for Rollin that we have some hardships, some demands upon our endurance and courage. There are men who never grow up without it."

"That's it!" cried Georgia. "You've summed up most of Rollin's trouble. He's just never grown up. I guess that is why I've never blamed him."

The *Anywhere*, built for arctic ice, not speed or comfort in more southern waters, lumbered and wallowed and shook herself slowly northward through fair weather and storms. Her blunt, heavy bows had a disagreeable manner of smashing terrifically into head seas, and her deck was seldom dry when the wind blew. Consequently there was some seasickness in the main cabin, but after a week all were on deck every day and the Temple party and the crew settled into the routine which was to be theirs for many months.

If David Baird had ever had regrets that his quick answer to Georgia's sudden, mute appeal had torn him from his work in the laboratory, they were forgotten in the pure joy of this voyage with her. Rollin, once he had recovered from the effects of his Boston spree, was nervous and often irritable. He spent long hours alone, lying at full length on the deck-house. Mr. Temple, who had come aboard armed with many cases of books, spent his days perfecting himself in a knowledge of the Indian tribes and various bands of Eskimos who now, or in the past, had frequented the district to which they were going.

Georgia, free of the responsibilities of preparation, conscious that she had done her full share in aiding her father in the scientific end of the expedition, gave herself over to the pure joy of living. Rollin was having his chance of regeneration, her father was on his way to success in something that had become more than a hobby with him. There was nothing more that she wished in the world, and to David Baird fell the fruits of this period of her complete content.

For hours each day they paced the deck or sat side by side. They talked and read to each other, discussed the white Indians, Rollin's chances, people they knew at home, but never themselves.

It was the one barrier David could not pass. Georgia, in her attitude toward him, was no different than toward Rollin. Her mind and her heart were clear as clearest crystal. She hid nothing from him, did not probe to see if he hid things from her. She was a companion purely and simply, and against this unconscious defense he was powerless.

David had waited too many years, had hoped and planned too long, to rush these defenses now. To be alone with Georgia, to know that months and months of being alone with her lay before him, these were enough for the present.

They touched at Halifax for mail and the completeness of the preliminary success of the expedition was assured. Mr. Temple, in his great desire to be first in the discovery of the white Indians, had kept everything about their plans as secret as possible. But once they had sailed there was no way of knowing whether their destination had become known. Accordingly, he had instructed his secretary in Chicago to send any press clippings or comments in scientific cricles, made upon or after their departure, to Halifax.

"They think I'm going hunting polar bears, or walruses, or something of the sort," he exclaimed gleefully as the party sat about the table in the main cabin opening mail. "Not a whisper, and there hasn't been an indication of any one else starting such an expedition. We're going to be alone in this, and we're going to be first."

Gerogia shared her father's joy because she knew how much priority and success meant to him.

"We'll stay two years if we have to," she declared enthusiastically. "We'll find those Indians before we come back, won't we, Dad?"

"How about your friend, Donald Whitney?" asked David banteringly.

"I have something on him here," answered Mr. Temple. "My friend Simpson writes that he has had a letter from Whitney from down the MacKenzie River, or some place over there near the Rockies. Even if he were interested in these Indians, which I very much doubt, from all I have learned of him, he couldn't be going in search of them in that direction."

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The voyage wore slowly on. Ice drove them into Sandwich Bay, at the southern end of Labrador, for a month, and later, when they did start, it was only to reach Rigolet in Hamilton Inlet, a little way beyond. In the ice floes encountered there Captain Hewitt refused to use the gas engine and depended entirely upon sail.

"We can't carry as much fuel as we would wish and we'll need all we have when we get farther north," he explained. "It doesn't make any difference now if we do get carried back a few hundred miles. We would have to lay up somewhere anyhow, for we can't get through the straits until the first of August at the earliest."

This entire dependence upon sails meant more and harder work for the crew, longer hours on deck and close lookouts. But the men took it as a matter of course, displayed an entire familiarity with work among the ice floes, and finally permitted Georgia to force from Captain Hewitt the grudging admission—

"They'll do."

BY MID-JULY they were off Okkak, the "Markland of the Norsemen," Georgia explained, and Captain Hewitt, who rarely was optimistic over anything, announced that he had never seen the season so early and that they might hope to get through Hudson's Straits a week or two before he expected.

The last of July they were well into the Straits and the bow of the *Anywhere* was turned at last toward Chesterfield Inlet, still nearly a thousand miles to the westward. Much rough weather had been encountered on the way, but comparatively calm seas and a wind which kept the ice packed to the north permitted rapid progress under sail across the mouth of Ungava Bay. Then it switched suddenly into the northwest, became a gale overnight, and the *Anywhere* was caught in a wild fury of crushing seas and driving, grinding ice.

All day and all night Captain Hewitt did not leave the deck. For the first time the engine was brought into use, but it was capable of only six or seven miles an hour under favorable conditions and was barely able to hold the ship's head up into the wind.

In the midst of it, and in the bare half-hour of complete darkness the second night, the *Anywhere*, driving off before the wind to escape a huge iceberg that had been sighted straight ahead, struck with a crash that brought one topmast to the deck and seemed to wrench every plank from the ribs.

No one in the main cabin had gone to bed. Georgia and her father were thrown into a corner, their chairs on top of them. Rollin's head struck a stanchion and a gash was cut over one ear. David Baird went sprawling across the table on to the floor on the other side, but was unhurt.

The shock was followed by a grinding, crunching sound from forward. Then the ship gave a lurch and seemed to slide off and down.

"We're sinking!" cried Mr. Temple, as he felt the deck go down beneath him.

"Not yet!" shouted David above the shrieking of the gale. "Wait here, all of you. I'll see what's happened."

The others had risen to their feet, an assurance to the physician that none could be seriously hurt, and he turned at once to the companionway and went on deck.

The wind brought him up staggering, clutching for support. The darkness and the blinding spray made it impossible for him to see anything except the dim outline of a figure at the wheel.

"What happened?" he shrieked as he groped his way toward the wheelman.

"Hit the foot of that big 'berg under water," came the reply in a shout that was torn to shreds as it whipped past David and he caught only a few words.

"Foretopmast came down," continued the seaman. "All hands ordered out."

Some one brushed past David in the darkness and he heard the roar of Volberg's voice shouting orders.

"Are we going to sink?" David asked the seaman.

"Guess not. She was built for that sort of thing. Mate's sent a man down to find out if she is leaking."

"Where's the captain?"

"Haven't heard him since we struck. He was on deck, up forward, when the lookout sighted the 'berg."

Volberg came back through the darkness, still shouting commands.

"That you, Captain?" he asked when he saw two figures at the wheel.

"Captain was forward, sir," said the man.

"Can't find him there," exclaimed the mate. "He must have gone overboard."

He rushed below and returned in a moment with a lantern. He went forward

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at once along the port rail, and in a moment David heard him shout—

"Come here, Doctor!"

Holding fast to the rail, slipping and sliding, sometimes almost wrenched loose, David made his way toward the lantern, which was held just above the deck. When he gained the mate's side the light showed a broken portion of the foretopmast lying across the body of a man.

"The captain!" shouted Volberg. "Take the lantern. I'll carry him."

David held the light while the mate, with one heave, lifted the broken piece of mast. Then he bent and picked up the unconscious captain and made his way aft more quickly than David could follow with the lantern. In the cabin Volberg laid his burden full length on the table and then turned at once toward the companionway.

"Do what you can, Doctor!" he called. "I'm needed on deck."

"Is he dead?" cried Georgia as she saw the white face streaked with blood.

David bent over the captain and worked rapidly for a moment.

"Shoulder broken," he announced at last. "Unconscious from a blow on the head. I don't believe the skull is fractured."

"We're without a captain, then?" asked Mr. Temple in dismay.

"For some time," answered David. "His head caught the full force of that mast when it fell, but I don't think it will be fatal. I can tell better later."

From on deck came the roar of Volberg's voice, the scraping of hurrying feet, the sounds of axes. Then there was silence, except the noise of the storm, and the mate entered the cabin.

"Bad?" he asked.

"Serious, but I hardly think fatal," answered David. "How about the ship?"

"Leaking a little forward. That smash would have sent most vessels to the bottom, but the *Anywhere* was built for just such things. We lost the foretopmast and some rigging, but the wreckage is cleared away and the watch below are back in their bunks."

"Then you will be in command?" asked Mr. Temple.

"Yes, sir, until Captain Hewitt is able to be on deck again. I think he made a mistake in coming so far north without a second mate, but I'll bring one of the men aft to be first officer. Any one of them is capable of handling it."

Through the night and the next day the storm continued. Several times there were narrow escapes from the swiftly moving ice, but Volberg proved himself as efficient a navigator in Northern seas as Captain Hewitt and when at last the storm blew out and the mate announced their position to be between Coats and Mansfield Islands and to the south of them, the Temple party were assured that the accident to the captain had in no way delayed the expedition.

David had spent the remainder of the night with his patient, setting the shoulder, sewing up the big gash in his head and examining him for further injuries. Rollin's head, too, needed attention, and Mr. Temple, after all was over, discovered that he had received a painful bruise on his right arm.

Once the storm was over, however, one of those bright days so rare in Northern seas brought every one except Captain Hewitt on deck. He still remained unconscious, but David refused to believe this indicated a fatal result.

The wind was in the south and the *Anywhere*, on the port tack, was headed straight for the mouth of Chesterfield Inlet, less than three hundred miles distant. The fair weather and the nearness of their destination had revived the spirits of the party and the four sat in a row on the deck-house, reveling in the warm sun and discussing the possibilities of success once they were at the head of the inlet.

"How unusual!" exclaimed Georgia when she turned to look forward. "All the crew are on deck at once. The mate is talking to them."

The others turned to see, and as they did so, Volberg, with an impatient shrug of his shoulders, wheeled away from the sailors.

Instantly there was a clamor among the men. One grasped the mate's arm and whirled him back to face them. Their voices were loud and acrimonious, though the words could not be distinguished aft. Then Volberg became angry, gestured emphatically. A sailor answered him in a lower tone and then all seven gathered in a close group facing the mate while the sailor who was evidently the spokesman, with fist smacking in palm, proceeded to deliver what appeared to be an ultimatum.

The group on the deck-house watched wonderingly.

"What can be the matter?" asked Georgia anxiously.

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No one answered, for suddenly Volberg left the group at the forecastle and came rapidly aft. He stopped before the four people on the deck-house, but it was Mr. Temple he addressed when he spoke.

"There is trouble forward, sir," he began. "The crew refuses to go any further."

"Refuses!" exclaimed Mr. Temple. "Why?"

"They say they want an understanding as to their share in the treasure. They say they are entitled to it and that they insist upon an agreement with you before they go on."

CHAPTER IV

THE LAND OF SNORRI GELLISON

"TREASURE!" cried Mr. Temple in amazement. "We are not after any treasure! What treasure could there be in such a place?"

"I am merely reporting what the men say, sir," answered Volberg.

"But where could they get such a ridiculous idea? It's preposterous. This is purely a scientific expedition and there has been no thought of treasure."

"They say that is merely a blind, sir, and that they understand very well the real object of the voyage. They say they do not intend to take part in a treasure-hunt and not receive their share, that it is against all traditions and customs of the sea."

"You are in command of this ship, Mr. Volberg," broke in David. "Such a thing is no less than mutiny, and those men surely understand what that means."

"There are seven men before the mast, sir," answered the mate quietly, "and the cook and the engineer. They are all armed, and it is nine against the four of us."

"But," shouted Mr. Temple angrily, "there isn't any treasure to go after."

"How does it happen that those men are armed?" asked David. "I didn't know sailors were permitted to bring weapons aboard."

"Evidently they did, sir."

"But they are your men. You brought them. Didn't you know it?"

"I never suspected such a thing, and they were not armed on the other voyages I have been with them."

"You don't think we are after treasure do you, Mr. Volberg?" asked Georgia.

"I know nothing about the voyage, miss," was the answer. "None of you have ever spoken about it to me directly. Captain Hewitt insisted upon secrecy when we left Boston. He said the object of the voyage was not to be known to any one and had me give those orders to the men."

"Listen, Mr. Volberg," said David. "This expedition has as its object the investigation of a report that there is a band of Indians near the head of Chesterfield Inlet who, because of certain physical characteristics, are believed to be descendants of a tribe that intermarried with the Norsemen a thousand years ago. These Indians are reported to visit the head of the inlet each year and we hope to find the remains of a stone village where the Norsemen are supposed to have lived. Beyond that we have no reason for coming here."

"That's it, all of it," affirmed Mr. Temple. "I wish you would tell the men what Doctor Baird has said, Mr. Volberg."

"Very well, sir," and the mate went forward.

The members of the Temple party saw him talking to the sailors, who gathered in a close group in front of him. Then the seaman who had spoken before again began to beat his left palm with his right fist. He spoke for several minutes, and when he had finished Volberg again came aft.

"They refuse to accept your explanation, sir," he said, addressing Mr. Temple.

"But where on earth did they get the idea that we are after treasure?"

"They say everything points to it, sir. They say that if this is a scientific expedition there should have been no reason for secrecy. And they told me to tell you that they have heard the report which, they say, really caused the arrangement of this voyage, the story of the Spanish treasure-ship which was chased north by British vessels, shook them off and then met two ships of the Hudson's Bay Company, which pursued them through Hudson's Straits, across Hudson's Bay and lost them at the mouth of Chesterfield Inlet.

"They say you have a report, found in an old record in Spain, that this ship was caught at the head of Chesterfield Inlet by the ice and that, when it was about to be crushed, the crew carried the treasure ashore and buried it. They Wintered there, but disease and starvation cut down their number one-half, while a band of Indians

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massacred all the survivors except one, who escaped and somehow or other got back to Spain, through the Spanish colonies to the south."

The Temples stared in amazement at Volberg as he told the story.

"Where did the men get this story?" asked David.

"They merely told me that they know you are acting upon the facts I have told, not upon any report of Norsemen in Chesterfield Inlet."

"What do you advise doing, Mr. Volberg?" asked Mr. Temple.

"I hardly know, sir. We are in a bad position because the crew is armed."

"But that is a fairy tale pure and simple," declared David.

"They say they are sure of their information and that they will not be put off by any other explanation," answered the mate.

"This whole affair is absurd, as absurd as their fantastic story of the Spanish treasure-ship," exclaimed Mr. Temple. "Call the crew, Mr. Volberg, and I'll talk to them."

The mate shouted an order and the seven seamen came aft and gathered in a group on the main deck just forward of the poop.

"You want an understanding regarding your share of the treasure we are after," said Mr. Temple. "Very well, you shall have it. Whatever treasure we find, gold, silver, precious stones or anything else that may be converted into money or wealth of any sort, anything except that which is of scientific value, will be divided into eleven equal parts and the captain, mate, cook, engineer and each man before the mast will receive one of these shares. My party will receive nothing. Is that satisfactory?"

The members of the crew merely stared at Mr. Temple. Several shifted their glance to the mate. None spoke.

"I'll go below and write out an agreement just as I have stated it," added Mr. Temple ironically, "and I and each member of my party will sign it. Can you ask anything more fair than that?"

Still there was no response, though the men looked suspiciously at the speaker and one or two muttered something in an undertone.

"That's all!" cried Mr. Temple scornfully as he turned his back on the men and rejoined the group sitting on the deckhouse. The seamen went forward slowly, talking in whispers among themselves.

"Does that settle it, Mr. Volberg?" asked Mr. Temple.

"It seems to have done so, sir," answered the mate. "If there is any more trouble I will report it to you at once."

It was the mate's watch on deck and he left the group and stood aft of the man at the wheel. After a moment Mr. Temple arose and the others followed him down into the main cabin.

"Where on earth," demanded the leader of the expedition, "did they ever get hold of that story? I thought for a minute that they were going to make trouble for us, but I think my offer rather settled it."

"Where did they ever hear it in the first place?" asked Georgia. "I can't understand it, and I never imagined that our effort to maintain secrecy would give rise to the treasure idea."

David rose suddenly and jerked open the door leading to the galley. Joe Brandt, the cook, jumped from his knees and ran back down the passageway.

"WE SEEM to be in a pretty mess," said Mr. Temple as they stared at each other. "Captain unconscious, crew in a state of mutiny and spying upon us, and here we haven't even begun to work."

"There's this about it," said David as he resumed his chair. "I don't think we are in any danger. Even if the crew persists in this treasure theory it is hardly likely that they will take the consequences of open revolt unless they should actually see treasure loaded on to the ship. As a matter of fact, all they have demanded is an understanding as to the division of the mythical booty, and Mr. Temple has given them that."

"But we are helpless," protested Georgia. "There are three of you men and Mr. Volberg against the nine of them, and all are armed. Why, they could abandon us, or throw us overboard, or do anything, and there is no help for us up here."

"But they are not going to take any such step as that unless they see something to be gained," David assured her. "A sailor doesn't mutiny without good reason, and a man doesn't plan to steal unless he is certain there is something to be stolen."

"What would you advise then?" asked Mr. Temple.

"Simply that we go on as we have

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planned. We are not going to find any treasure. The crew will see that we don't, and they are not going to risk the consequences of mutiny with no stakes to play for."

"But won't they cause trouble, abandon us on land, for instance, to escape punishment for their action this morning?" asked Rollin.

"Their action this morning was perfectly legal and justifiable," answered David. "All they did, really, was to ask for an understanding as to the division of treasure, something they would be entitled to if we were after the wreck of a Spanish ship."

"Of course," Georgia agreed. "This was only a minor affair after all, though it certainly was alarming for a moment, wasn't it?"

"Minor, yes," said David, "but nevertheless I don't think we should take any chances. In another day or two, with good weather, we will be at the head of Chesterfield Inlet and ready to go ashore to begin the search. I believe we should establish a rule that one of the three men here should always remain aboard and that when the other two go ashore they should take enough men to divide the crew as evenly as possible."

"Do you think such precautions necessary, David?" asked Georgia anxiously.

"Necessary only because we are alone up here in an isolated, rarely visited corner of the world where we can expect no help," was the answer. "We owe it to ourselves to be careful, is all. Really, I don't think there is any danger. We have had a slight sensation after a long, monotonous voyage, and we have magnified it. Analyzing the affair, we find there is no cause for alarm. My suggestions were made merely because no precautions are to be neglected in such an out-of-the-way place."

"David is right," affirmed Mr. Temple. "There is no cause to be frightened because of what happened this morning. But how about the mate? Did you see that he did not commit himself either way?"

"Volberg has too much to lose through mutiny," declared David. "There is no reason to suspect him."

"But where," persisted Georgia, "did this story of buried treasure come from? We certainly never were responsible for it."

"Some one among the crew has an imagination," suggested David. "Anyhow, it is a myth, and they will see when we get there that they have been misled."

Despite David's assurances and the expressed belief of the mate that no further trouble was to be expected from the sailors there was a new atmosphere aboard the *Anywhere*. Members of the crew performed their duties as thoroughly and as well as before and in no way indicated that they still doubted the true object of the voyage. Songs were heard in the forecastle and apparently the incident was forgotten.

David and Mr. Temple took pains to acquaint the mate thoroughly with the facts the expedition hoped to uncover, what they planned to do and the probable length of their stay in Chesterfield Inlet. Volberg listened interestedly and when they had finished he laughed outright.

"That's a lot different from the notion the forecastle had," he said.

"And you'll do what you can to see that the forecastle understands the truth," admonished Mr. Temple.

"Naturally, sir, but I don't think you need worry further about the crew."

The afternoon of the second day after the seamen had presented their demands the progress of the *Anywhere* was halted by ice. They were less than fifty miles from the mouth of Chesterfield Inlet, and though Volberg cruised far to the north and then to the south, there was no opening. The very wind that had aided them through Hudson's Straits had packed the ice into the northwest corner of the bay, and there was nothing to do but wait until a shift in the wind permitted a passage.

It was the first week in August when they met the barrier and a week went by before the ice-pack loosened. In the meantime Captain Hewitt had recovered consciousness but his condition was such that nothing of what had happened could be communicated to him. Aided by Georgia, David had done what he could for the injured man, but even with returning consciousness it was seen that the captain's mind was a blank so far as events since the beginning of the voyage were concerned.

"He'll get well," David said one day, "but it will be a long and tedious affair. I shouldn't wonder but that we'll be in Boston, if we get back this year, before he is himself again."

With the object of their journey less than

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two hundred and fifty miles to the westward, the delay taxed the patience of the Temple party. Daily they paced the deck or climbed into the rigging, aiding the crew in the constant lookout for a change in ice conditions.

When at last the pack began to loosen Volberg assented to Mr. Temple's desire that the motor be used, and the *Anywhere* poked her nose between the floes. Two days of such progress and land appeared, and the night of the third day they were well into the mouth of the inlet.

That afternoon the entire Temple party remained on deck. It was their first glimpse of the land they sought, of the shores upon which their hopes of the expedition were to be realized or shattered. Glasses were in constant use, and once they passed close to an island and were given a more intimate glimpse of the country.

Nothing could have been more dismaying. Not a tree, not a shrub, not a blade of grass was to be seen. Boulders, boulders, rocks, rocks, cliffs of solid stone, hills that were only huge boulders, a shore strewn with small ones, rounded and broken by the ice, that was all they saw. Nothing living, no indication that anything living ever had been there or ever could exist there, was to be seen.

To each member of the Temple party it was something new, something more desolate than imagination had ever pictured. Snow lay on the north side of huge rocks, the air was cold, a mist usually enshrouded the land, though it was Summer.

"I knew it!" exclaimed Mr. Temple after a thorough survey of the shore through a pair of strong glasses. "We have come on a useless, hare-brained journey. Nothing lives here or can live here, and no Norseman ever chose such a place for a home. We'll not find any Indians. They couldn't exist in such a place."

Georgia, too, was oppressed by the forbidding nature of the land they had sought. David, however, was more matter-of-fact.

"I wouldn't give up yet," he advised. "Greenland isn't any better than this, and you know the Norsemen lived there. And Indians have been known to live as far north as this, even farther."

In the next four days they were given abundant opportunity to become accustomed to the country, for it was the last of August before they finally reached the head of the inlet and the scene of their operations. Islands aided in preventing the passage of the ice out into the bay, and the unknown nature of the channel made imperative every precaution in navigation. Tide rips were frequent, but Volberg was on deck constantly and his handling of the ship brought the comment from David that they seemed to have lost nothing in the injury to Captain Hewitt.

"We are entering North Bay, the end of the inlet, sir," the mate reported to Mr. Temple one afternoon. "Off which shore do you wish to anchor?"

"The south. We expect to find the village half-way between a river entering from the south and the southern of the two streams that flow into the inlet from Baker Lake to the west."

"I think you can begin your work on land tomorrow morning, then," declared the mate.

BEFORE darkness came Mr. Temple had an opportunity to compare the map of the Hudson's Bay Company explorer, tracings of which had been made in Chicago, with the coast as he saw it. There was nothing, however, to give encouragement, nothing on the map that conformed in any way with the shore line as viewed from the ship.

This fact was discussed that night in the main cabin, but it failed to bring discouragement. Mr. Temple, after his first view of the desolate country at the mouth of the inlet, had regained his enthusiasm for the search.

"That map probably was drawn from hearsay anyhow," he declared. "You'll notice that it is barely more than a straight line between the mouths of the two rivers, while we see points and bays. And the location of the village is fixed merely by a cross placed just back of this line. It merely means that we must search the entire coast along here."

It was the first opportunity in nearly three months for any of them to set foot on shore and, because they were all anxious to go, it was arranged that Mr. Temple, David and Georgia, with four of the crew, should be the first to land.

Night brought the shore party back without even a clue, however. They had spent the day learning how difficult their task was to be, for, with rare exceptions, the shore

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was only a mass of boulders, and cliffs and steep hills lay immediately back of it. But they were at it early the next morning and the *Anywhere* was moved westward to keep near their explorations. The third day Georgia remained aboard with Captain Hewitt, whose condition was not so promising, and David and her father continued the search.

That night the *Anywhere* reached the mouth of the southern river flowing out of Baker Lake and the search had extended along the entire shore without results.

"Could I see your map, sir?" asked Volberg after dinner. "Perhaps I can get a hint as to where the village is."

Mr. Temple brought out the tracing.

It was faithful in every little detail and clearly showed that it had been made over a map of at least a century before. The mate studied it for some time and then shook his head.

"It's either intended to deceive or it was made from reports," he finally announced. "We haven't seen a bit of coast anything like this."

"But it is clearly shown by the map, and it was also told in the reports we had, that the site of the village lay between the mouths of the two rivers I have mentioned," said Mr. Temple. "This is a stretch of about twenty miles, and we have looked over all of it."

The mate shook his head and went up on deck.

"Look here, father," said Rollin. "Volberg and you are both right. That map doesn't conform with the shore-line at all. It probably was drawn, as he said, from hearsay. You've gone at this in the wrong way."

Georgia, her father and David stared at the young man in amazement. It was the first time he had taken any interest in the search. For three weeks he had evidently been subjected to a terrific strain. The whisky David had brought aboard was exhausted, and there was little that the physician could do to release him from the clutch of his desire.

Rollin saw the astonishment in the faces of the others and exclaimed savagely.

"I want to get ashore for one thing. If I climb over a few of those rocks I may get tired enough to sleep nights."

"I'd be glad to have you, boy," Mr. Temple assured him, and there was a new light in the father's eyes as he spoke. "But what's been wrong in the search?"

"You've practically proven that the map is useless, but you know, from what information you are working on, that the village is on the south shore of this bay between the mouths of the two rivers," answered Rollin. "In three days you have been over practically the whole shore and you haven't found a trace.

"Now look at this thing as the Norsemen would have done. There wasn't a place you visited that you would pick out for the site of a village, a site sheltered from the worst Winter winds, was there?"

Both Mr. Temple and David shook their heads.

"Of course not," continued Rollin. "But the one site where shelter was possible you overlooked."

"Overlooked? How? When?" asked the others.

"Yesterday noon. I was watching you through the glasses. You landed at the foot of a bay, explored the shores carefully where they were easily approached, and then you got back into the boat and were rowed around the point. From your position on the water you could not see a shelf back among the cliffs, about a quarter of a mile across each way, and protected on all except the southeast side. It was possible for the Norsemen to beach their boats where you landed, but the site for the village would have been in the sheltered spot."

Whether it was the hope contained in Rollin's suggestion or the delight in his son's sudden interest, the others could not tell, but Mr. Temple became more enthusiastic than ever. The next morning a cold wind from the east and a driving rain that sometimes turned to snow did not deter him, and, with three sailors, he and Rollin went ashore in the bay Rollin had spoken of, the *Anywhere* having been moved back in the night.

Mr. Temple and David had taken the sailors with them to aid in the search, but this morning, anticipating the unusual pleasure of a day alone with his son, the leader of the expedition instructed the men to remain at the boat.

It is doubtful if the anticipation of finding the village site was more stimulating to Mr. Temple than this excursion with Rollin. To be alone with the boy when he was his natural self, to be engaged in an enterprise

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together, to share the excitement of the search and the disappointment or elation of failure or success, these were far more to the parent than the finding of a village inhabited by Norsemen themselves.

This spirit persisted in Mr. Temple despite the storm. He climbed over the rocks like a boy, Rollin himself having difficulty in keeping pace with him.

"Wait, Dad," called the son when his father reached the top of the rise back of the beach. "We want to cut across this way and see if there isn't a passage through that rock wall that will lead into the sheltered place I spoke of. If there is none there isn't much hope of our finding the village because they would not have had a means of reaching it from the beach."

He led the way more slowly to the right until they came to a low but straight and impassable barrier of rock. They proceeded along the south side of this until Rollin stopped suddenly.

"There's my first guess," he said with a faint show of excitement.

He pointed to an opening that led through toward the point upon which he, with the glasses, had seen the sheltered place from shipboard. A bend in the passage prevented their looking through, but that it was an opening was clearly evident. Mr. Temple slapped his son on the back gleefully and started at once.

"Look, Rollin!" he cried suddenly as he turned and pointed to the bottom of the cut. "This has been used. Notice that all the loose rocks have been cleared from the middle and that there is a smooth path right through? Human hands must have done that."

He went on eagerly, so swiftly that in a moment he was lost to view around the bend. Then Rollin heard him call and ran forward.

Mr. Temple was standing at the end of the passage looking out over a wide, level stretch of ground hemmed in on three sides by high cliffs and open only toward the southeast. From where he stood he could see the rigging of the *Anywhere* at the head of the bay but not down to the beach where they had landed. But it was not toward these things that he pointed as Rollin came up beside him.

Across the enclosure, for such it really was, and strung irregularly along the base of the cliff that formed the north wall, were rows of stones appearing not unlike the crumbled masonry of buildings burned long before. Even at that distance they were the ruins of the village beyond a doubt.

CHAPTER V

MUTINY

AS ROLLIN came up beside his father Mr. Temple threw one arm across his son's shoulder and gave him an enthusiastic squeeze.

"You've done it, boy!" he cried. "You've found it, right where we passed around!"

Rollin did not speak. He recognized in his father's joy something more than elation over the first success of the expedition. For the first time in their lives the two shared equally in something worth while, experienced a common pleasure, a fellowship they had never known.

If the son remained silent it was because he was even more strongly swayed by this new emotion than his father. He cared nothing about ethnology, could not know the joy of discovery. Yet he knew he had found something more precious than all the ruins of any people, and instinctively he reached his father's hand and gripped it.

Together they walked across the level opening toward the site of what had been the village of Snorri Gellison. And as they stood beside the first tumbled rectangle it did not need the father's eager explanations to make Rollin feel that he had really taken part in a scientific discovery of great value.

The isolation, the forbidding coast, the ancient ruins, all gave testimony to a brave race of mariners who had sailed uncharted seas and built their homes and passed away long before history had taken note of the continent of North America. That their traditions, their physical characteristics, or any traces of them, could still be found in an unknown tribe of Indians brought a thrill to Rollin that he did not know ethnology could impart.

For a time Mr. Temple was too excited to do more than roam around through what had been the village, indulging in incoherent conjectures as to which had been the stables, the homes and the storehouses. Success had come so suddenly after three days of discouraging search that for a time he was almost hysterical with joy.

Their initial failure had brought back

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more strongly than ever the forebodings and distrust which had punctuated his investigations in Chicago. Added to this had been a despondency over Rollin that he had confided to no one. His disappearance in Boston and his moodiness and silence during the voyage had confirmed the father's fears that the expedition would only be another failure in their efforts either to understand or to help each other.

Now, with his son's spirits rising, with this new interest in a common ground, with the memory of that hand-grip still fresh, with the site of the Norsemen's village beneath his feet, his elation was almost pathetic.

"If this part's true the rest of it must be," he said once as they finished a round of the village together. "If we have the village there is no reason to believe but that the white Indians are true, too."

"There's no doubt of that, dad."

"No doubt! How do you know?"

"Come here," and Rollin led the way to an open space to the south of the ruins. Stopping, he pointed to the ground before him.

"See that," he said. "Some one built a fire there. Beyond it the moss has been burned off in another circle. Over there is still another with the moss beginning to grow again in spots. Some one has been here and built a fire, last year at the latest."

"You don't think it could have been Larson!" cried Mr. Temple in dismay. "He may have changed his mind and come this way. We have been a year too late, boy!"

"Larson nothing!" declared Rollin. "Don't you see what it means? There was a fire here last year and one the year before that and one three years ago. Why, Dad, it's the band of Indians! They come every year just as the legend says."

For a moment his father was silent as he stood looking at the unmistakable evidences of the success of their expedition. Then he placed a hand on his son's shoulder.

"Boy," he said, his voice husky with excitement, "we're done it, you and I, a couple of amateurs! We can go back with the first proof that a race of people lived and died here and left a wealth of legend that has been kept alive in a band of North American Indians. Why, it doesn't seem possible that this success could come to us."

He started off on an ecstatic round of the tumbled walls. Rollin wandered about in the open space south of the village. When they met again the young man held out his trophies proudly.

"Here is more evidence of the Indians," he said, "some bones, a piece of moccasin, a worn-out copper knife of native manufacture, and a broken stone vessel. Looks as though it had been used in cooking."

In answer his father pointed to his find, his eyes shining with excitement.

"And do you see what this is?" he asked. "A stone with an inscription carved in runic letters! This is wonderful. It exceeds anything I had hoped to find. We'll go back with a story that will make Georgia and David think we are romancing."

"If we're going to stay here until night we had better send the boat back," suggested Rollin. "There is no need for the men to wait down there on the shore and get soaked in this storm. They can come out for us later."

"Will you go and send them?" asked his father. "Have them tell Georgia and David what we have found."

"Georgia and David will have to wait. I can signal the boat from the edge of the cliff over there. They'll understand."

Rollin saw the boat start back and then returned to his father. Though the storm grew worse they continued to work all day. The young man began to share his father's enthusiasm for the ruins themselves and neither of them felt the discomforts of the snow and sleet. They had brought a lunch, but they ate as they worked, wandering about with sandwiches in their hands. When at last they knew that they must return to the beach they were wet through. The quick walk through the break in the rock wall and down to the shore warmed them, but they had to wait more than half an hour before they were seen from the ship and a boat had reached them.

The wind had swung into the north and a sea broke on the beach which made getting away difficult. Rollin and his father were drenched in the surf and they were so nearly overcome by the cold they could only crouch in the bow with a piece of canvas to protect them from the spray and wind. By the time they reached the ship they were too cold even to speak, and they were helped aboard and below before David or Georgia could understand that the village had been found.

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There was a celebration in the main cabin that night. After the months of conjecture and the days of futile searching neither Georgia nor David could bring themselves to believe that the village of Snorri Gellison was a reality. They kept Mr. Temple busy giving careful descriptions of the ruins, enumerating the number of houses, detailing their arrangement and estimating the number of people who had composed the party.

Mr. Temple was sufficiently excited about the discovery of the village, but when he came to tell about Rollin's deductions concerning the yearly visits of the white Indians and his son's part in the discovery of the village itself, he became almost incoherent in his joy. Delighted as both Georgia and David were over the successful outcome of the day's search, it was Rollin himself who first brought realization of the fact that the day had done much toward achievement of the double purpose of the expedition.

His good color, his entire freedom from the old nervousness and irritability, had been noticed immediately and attributed to his first day of strenuous exercise in the open. But when he broke in upon their eager conjecture it was with an air of elation that they associated only with his old days of virile work.

"You've all missed the point of this thing!" he exclaimed. "You see it as ethnologists, talk like scientists, and you miss the romance of it all. But I am the one who really made the big discovery. It's what I've always needed in my work, what I have groped for and hoped for, and because I have failed in that I haven't been a success."

"Your work!" interrupted Georgia in amazement. "How could anything in the ruins of that rough village built a thousand years ago have a bearing on modern architecture?"

"You've hit it exactly," replied Rollin. "These people were barbarians, with barbarians' tools, barbarians' ideas, with the barbarians' conception of beauty. And yet see what they accomplished! We marvel at the things the Romans and Greeks and Egyptians handed down to us, but they were civilized people, and civilized people have surrounded their work since its completion.

"But up here in this out-of-the-way place, where white men have practically never come, in as desolate and barren and forbidding a land as I can imagine, these wanderers from Iceland built something that has endured by itself, without any care or guardianship.

"Now, after a thousand years, you can visit the site of their village and, if you are not smothered by science, you can picture them as they were, as they lived here, as they suffered and played, as they dreamed and died. When the snow was thick this afternoon I was sure I could catch glimpses of sod roofs above some of those walls, that yellow-haired children were playing in the enclosure, and when I went to signal to the men to return to the ship I was sure I saw one of their boats drawn up on the beach."

"But what," persisted Georgia, "has that to do with your work?"

"DON'T you see?" explained Rollin earnestly. "It's the permanency of the thing. Heretofore I have striven for effect, for immediate results, for what people would say. I used to dream of my plans coming into being, but that was all. To think of them as something that would exist long after I was forgotten, to remain as evidences of the advancement and culture of the age, as monuments to the people who live now, as an index to their character and mode of life, that never occurred to me. Now with that new idea, with the ideas the Greeks and Romans must have had when they built the monuments of Athens and Rome, I am going to accomplish something."

Even to Mr. Temple, entranced by his companionship with Rollin in the afternoon and full of hope for his son, the message of the young man's enthusiasm was plain. He was getting hold of himself, was fortified for a longer, stronger fight, and the father, his eyes misty, leaned across the table.

"Get them on paper, your ideas, boy!" he exclaimed. "I'll build them if no one else will. Make something that will last longer than Snorri Gellison's village."

There was only one disconcerting event in the evening's pleasure, and that was Volberg's announcement at dinner that the anchors were dragging and that it would be necessary to start the gas engine and seek the shelter of the north shore. The mate was too busy to appear at table or

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afterward, but before Mr. Temple retired he went on deck.

"Can you get back in the morning?" he asked.

"If this wind goes down, sir."

"Do it if you can, and we'll want some men to do some digging," Mr. Temple shouted as he grasped the rail for support.

"Very well, sir," answered Volberg. "Have you found your village?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Temple as he ducked into the companionway, "and get back in the morning early if there is any chance."

The next morning the Temple party wakened to find themselves again at the mouth of the bay on which the site of the village had been found. The wind had abated and shifted to the east and there was no sea running. In the excitement of preparing to go ashore none except Rollin remembered David's proposal that one man always remain on shipboard.

"I'll stay," he offered. "One day was as much as I can stand for a while, and David is needed in directing the crew. Father will be too excited if he is anything like he was yesterday."

Georgia, too, made preparations to go ashore with the others but at the last moment visited Captain Hewitt and found him querulously demanding her presence. Without hesitation she took off her heavy outer clothing and sent word to her father that she would remain aboard until the next day.

She went on deck to see the others off, Mr. Temple, David and six of the seamen. They had a box of lunch and planned to remain until dark. It was Mr. Temple's ambition to complete the investigation of the village as quickly as possible so that they would have more time for the search of the white Indians and a study of the strange tribe.

When she saw the boat land Georgia returned to her patient. For two hours he kept her busy with his demands. He was alternately plaintive and dictatorial, talked randomly of former voyages and complained incessantly of a pain in his head. It was not until mid-afternoon that he finally fell asleep and Georgia felt that she could go on deck.

Her first thought was of Rollin, to learn from him more details of the discovery of the day before. She searched the staterooms, the main cabin, the galley, the deck, but he was not to be seen. Nor were any of the crew who had remained on board, or even the mate, in sight. To all appearances she was alone with Captain Hewitt.

Mystified, a little anxious, Georgia looked at the shore. The boat, drawn up on the beach, lay where it had been when the landing party left it. From the *Anywhere's* position it was impossible to see the site of the village and nowhere else on shore could she catch a glimpse of any of the men.

As she was about to turn aft to the cabin there came the rumble of a laugh from forward. She wheeled but could not see any one. Then she heard another laugh, not so hoarse, derisive rather than amused.

With a bound Georgia started toward the open hatchway leading into the forecastle. As she neared it she heard more voices and then, cutting short the others, came Rollin's:

"Volberg, you're a corking good sailor, but that's as far as it goes. You can't see anything unless it has a rope or a sail in it."

There was no mistaking the tone, the manner, the inflection, of Rollin's voice. It meant only one thing. The work of months, the patient forbearance and sacrifice of David, the chance she had worked so hard to obtain for him, even the newborn faith of her father, had been thrown away in a few hours. It seemed the more unthinkable, coming as it did after a night when the hopes of all had been so high.

Tears streamed from her eyes and blinded her as she made her way aft. For the first time in her life there was only bitterness in her heart for her brother. Then suddenly the fighting spirit which had forced the expedition upon her father, which had carried the preparations through the first difficulties, came to the fore.

Georgia wheeled back toward the bow of the *Anywhere* and strode resolutely toward the forecastle. There was yet time to save him. He could not have been drinking long. She might bring him to his senses, and aid him to fight off the desire. She could reach David's medicine chest, perhaps could administer an opiate that would be effective. Then this need never be known, her father's faith in Rollin need not be shattered.

"Mr. Volberg," she called down the hatchway. "Mr. Volberg."

The mate came to the opening and she saw his face turned upward in the light from above.

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"Mr. Volberg, send Rollin up on deck at once," she said sharply.

"I don't think he cares to come, Miss," answered the mate with a smile.

"That's not the point," she retorted. "He must come."

Volberg looked at her for a moment and then said gruffly—

"I'd advise you to get back to your stateroom and stay there."

"What do you mean?" she demanded, failing to comprehend anything except the insolence of his tone."

"Just what I said. Things have changed a bit aboard this vessel. Get below and stay there."

Georgia looked at him in amazement for a moment and then called to her brother:

"Rollin! Rollin! Come up here at once!"

She heard faint sounds of a struggle. Then all was still.

"He doesn't care to go on deck just now," said Volberg. "You had better get below. I'm in charge now and what I say goes. There won't any harm come to you if you obey orders. Come, now. Get into your stateroom."

Georgia, angry, mystified, undecided, turned and looked shoreward. Six figures could be seen walking along the beach toward the boat. They pushed it off and began rowing toward the ship.

Silhouetted on the rise above the beach were two more. By the color of their clothing Georgia knew at once they were David and her father. The crew were coming aboard without them.

For a moment she looked toward them uncomprehendingly. Then the meaning of the situation flashed over her. Rollin was drunk, probably a prisoner in the forecastle, Volberg was insolent and in command, the crew was leaving shore without her father or David.

It could mean only one thing. The crew had mutinied. Volberg was with them. She was alone, helpless, on the *Anywhere*, with her father and David equally helpless on shore.

CHAPTER VI

THE LONG TRAILS CROSS

WHEN Georgia reached the main cabin and recovered from her first terror she realized that she may have jumped at conclusions too quickly, that intuition may have played her false. Volberg had been insolent, but he, too, may have been drunk. Her father and David were left on shore, but they may have chosen to remain there, may have sent the boat and crew out to the ship for more supplies or something needed in the work of investigating the site of the Norsemen's village.

In the quick hope that she had been wrong, that she had been misled, she started toward the companionway, only to stop when she heard a heavy step on deck. The hatch was thrown back and she looked up to see Volberg standing above her.

"I might as well tell you, miss," he began at once, "what has happened on board this ship so that you won't make any mistakes. We haven't for a minute swallowed the story about Norsemen building that village. We know it is the place where the Spaniards spent the Winter and that you folks know where the treasure is buried. That offer your father made was too good to be true. The map he showed me doesn't show where the treasure is, but you folks have another and that's what we want."

He paused for a moment and looked at her. Then he went on:

"That's the reason your father and the doctor are staying ashore. They'll keep on staying there until they give up that map. We've got you on board, and I guess it won't be long."

He slammed shut the hatch and went forward. Before the sound of his feet on the deck had died away Georgia recognized the method back of his manner of speaking. He had intended deliberately to frighten her, to cause submission through fear of what he had left unsaid.

He had conveyed by words the single idea that she was a hostage, would be held until her father and David had given up information relative to this absurd treasure. What more he had meant could be gathered only from his manner, and Georgia suddenly found herself trembling.

A feeble call from Captain Hewitt's stateroom served as an antidote for her terror and she went at once to his bedside. As she was about to offer the glass of water he requested, sounds of the returning boat came to her through an open porthole, and she stopped to listen.

"Any trouble?" asked Volberg from the deck.

"Not a bit," was the answer from the water.

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"Didn't show any signs of loosening up?"

"Naw! They keep talking about Norsemen until I'm tired of it. You might as well start putting on the screws."

"You explained about the girl?"

"Yes, and we made it good and strong. Where's the young fellow?"

"He's where he won't cause any trouble," answered Volberg. "Got so he takes his bottle without any urging. But we got him just in time. He began to think he was a teetotaler."

Georgia gave Captain Hewitt the glass of water and then hurried out into the cabin and across to her own stateroom. Even in her terror and consternation she could be glad that Rollin had tried. He had meant to be true. As she was about to open the door she heard some one in the passageway leading to the galley and turned to find Ed Garst, the seaman Captain Hewitt had employed, thrusting his head cautiously into the room.

"Listen, Miss," he whispered. "I'm in with this gang only to save my own hide. I'm a plain seaman but I've been a square one and I didn't cotton to this business of the rest of them. They're twisted by being off in Northern waters too long at a stretch and they think you and your pa and the rest is cheating them out of something that's rightfully theirs."

"But they won't do anything!" protested Georgia. "They won't dare."

"Men who have gone as far as they have will keep going farther all the time. They get scared and they're driven to it. That's why I come. Volberg's been drinking and the rest will be tonight sure. They've been four months with no excitement and no chance for it. And when they're drunk this ship won't be any place for you."

"What am I to do, then?" demanded Georgia as she shrank back against the door. "I can't get away."

"That's just why I come. Your father had Volberg get out those little canoes he brought along for going back into the country to see if they was watertight and ready. One's under the stern now, held by a painter. It's cloudy and it'll be dark early tonight, in about an hour, and then you drop over the rail by a line and get ashore."

"But then we will be no better off," she protested. "We'd starve, and freeze, there on the shore with nothing."

"That's better than staying aboard tonight, miss," replied Garst quietly. "There ain't much whisky, and when it's gone this will be safer for you. And if there's a chance for me to help you, you can count on my doing it."

Sudden suspicion came to Georgia and she looked at Garst closely. Was this part of Volberg's plan to get the three of them ashore and then desert them? Should she go and leave Rollin in their hands?

"How do I know you're not in with Volberg and the rest of them?" she demanded suddenly.

"You can't know, miss," he answered simply, "unless you take the word of a seaman who, man and boy, has been before the mast for thirty years."

"But my brother! I can't leave him here alone with them!"

"Don't worry about him. They'll never harm the goose that——"

Garst suddenly ducked back and shut the door. Georgia listened a moment and then heard the cook at work in the galley. Singing mingled with an unusual rattle of pans and she knew that Brandt, too, had spent the day in the forecastle.

Georgia went into her stateroom where she again put on the clothing she had brought for work ashore. As she dressed she reviewed what Garst had told her and knew that she could not do better than act upon his advice. She wished that she could have questioned him further, that she could have learned what Volberg and the crew hoped to accomplish, how they would act the next day.

When she had dressed Georgia went to Captain Hewitt's room and found him asleep. She returned to her own stateroom and locked the door, hoping that she would not be molested until it had become dark enough for her to get into the canoe. The difficulty of dropping down a rope into an unstable craft did not occur to her. She saw merely that she must get away from the ship, must reach her father and David to relieve them of the anxiety which she knew must be theirs.

As Georgia waited she heard the cook setting the table in the main cabin. A little later came the sound of feet on deck and Volberg descended the companionway. He crossed at once to her door and knocked.

"Dinner's ready for us!" he called.

"I'm not coming," answered Georgia.

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"It's a cold country for any one to be going long without their meals, miss, and besides it's lonesome out here, eating all alone."

Georgia did not reply.

"Oh, well, you'll get used to me later," said his voice as he turned away.

Georgia listened to the clatter of dishes and tableware. After twenty minutes the mate arose but he did not come near her door again. She heard him push back his chair and then speak, evidently addressing the cook.

"Don't bother her, Brandt," he commanded. "I'm going forward, and you get your work done and come too."

"What would I do?" demanded the cook sullenly.

"I don't know. That's just why I'm telling you. There's one bit of treasure none of you fellows cut in on. Understand?"

VOLBERG went on deck and Georgia heard the cook clearing off the table. When he had gone and closed the door leading to the galley she unlocked and opened her own door. From her stateroom porthole she had seen that it was quite dark, and as there were no sounds on deck she knew her chance had come.

Georgia had one thing to do in the main cabin before leaving. In the thoroughness of her preparations in Chicago she had evolved the plan of emergency rations and equipment. These she had done up in packages of various sizes and weights and, once on board the *Anywhere*, had found places for them in the drawers of the sideboard.

Noiselessly slipping out a drawer, she took one of the large bundles, one she knew contained pilot bread, a small kettle, tea, a little sugar, chocolate, raisins, some desiccated vegetables, condensed soups and matches. With this under one arm she crept up the companionway.

Volberg had not closed the hatch, and she could peep over the top toward the forward part of the ship without making any noise. Everything was in total darkness, but there was no sign of any one on deck. Forward there was a thin band of light showing where the forecastle hatchway had not been tightly shut, and there came to her the muffled sounds of laughter and singing.

Georgia knew it was her chance and she acted at once. She walked quietly to the rail and saw the dark shadow of the canoe. The painter was taut, as the tide was coming in, and even if she were to lower herself by a rope, she could not hope to drop into the little craft. She pulled it up beneath the stern, but, because of her height above it, she could not get it close enough. When she tried to haul it nearer the bow merely lifted while the stern dragged harder.

At the risk of making a noise by bumping it along the side of the ship, Georgia untied the painter and drew the canoe around from under the stern until it lay directly beneath the mizzen chains. She dropped the free end of a rope over until she felt it strike the canoe. To make certain that it was inside, she bent over and for the first time noticed the pale glint of a varnished paddle lying in the bottom.

The need of paddles had not occurred to her and the shock of the realization of what might have happened had she cut loose without any means of propulsion served to steady her through the task of lowering herself into the canoe. She buttoned her sweater around the package of emergency food, tied the arms around her neck so that the bundle swung at her back, and then climbed on to the rail.

To a man unaccustomed to such things, lowering himself into a light, unstable canoe as Georgia was compelled to do would have been no easy task. Her ignorance of how difficult it really was probably gave her the courage as much as the grim necessity, and she did not hesitate as she swung out and began to slide down the rope.

Instantly she found herself falling. She gripped the rope with both hands. Though they were torn and burned, she hung on. Her skirts prevented her twining her legs about the loose end of the rope beneath her, and she shot downward so swiftly she struck her canoe with a clatter and tumbled in a heap on the bottom. Only the fact that she had struck it squarely prevented its capsizing. As it was she took some water over one gunwale.

The noise of her embarking brought terror of discovery rather than fear of what might have happened, and Georgia immedaitely untied the painter. As she crawled carefully back to the center of the canoe she heard voices forward and then the sound of men running aft.

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Not daring to move, she crouched in the center of the canoe, hoping that in the darkness she would not be seen. She did not even look up for fear her white face would show and consequently was dumfounded to hear the voices, which had sounded so near, come suddenly from far away. She stole a glance upward to find the ship gone. Everything was black, silent, motionless. The tide, which had caused her first difficulties with the canoe, had carried her swiftly and silently away from the *Anywhere* and she was racing eastward toward the head of the inlet.

When Georgia felt that she was far enough away to permit paddling she lifted herself to her knees and picked up the blade. She was slightly more accustomed to the darkness now and she could see the shore, a black line, to the south. From the position in which the *Anywhere* had been swinging at anchor she knew the tide would carry her straight past the point which formed the east side of the bay in which her father and David had landed, and that she must work back against the current to get inside of it.

For fifteen minutes she paddled as best she could. Though she had had some experience in a canoe, it was not great, and progress was difficult. When she began to believe that she must be within the mouth of the bay she scanned the shoreline, only to find it far distant. Instead of being nearer she was farther away.

The knowledge served to redouble her efforts, but it was half an hour before she finally could see the shore more clearly. Nearly exhausted she struggled on, sobbing, tugging with her pain-wrenched arms, stifling a scream when the salt water bit into her torn palms.

At last, when she had about given up hope of ever making land, the cliffs seemed suddenly to rush out to meet her. From a vague, shadowy line they abruptly became distinct. Then, piercing the blackness at the base, showing only for a moment, flared out a bright, leaping fire.

Georgia called and began to paddle frantically. The current spun her around so that the cliffs were lost to view. The next moment they towered above her and the canoe was resting quietly beside a large rock. A little beyond lay what appeared to be a short strip of beach.

The light was not to be seen, but Georgia knew it could not be far away.

"Father!" she called. "Father! David!"

With a last hysterical thrust of her paddle against the rock, she shoved the canoe shoreward. As the bow grated on a gravel beach she heard footsteps and then a voice.

"Charley! Eltsi! Heigh-o!"

"Here!" called Georgia. "It's not Charley. It's——"

The sound of feet came nearer. A light flashed in Georgia's face, blinding her so that she could not see behind it. Then she saw two moccasined feet beneath the blaze of an electric torch and a hand reached out and grasped the bow of the canoe.

"Good Lord!" came the voice from behind the light. "The girl in the library!"

CHAPTER VII

THE "X" IN THE PROBLEM

"LIBRARY!" repeated Georgia involuntarily. "What library?"

"What on earth are you doing here?" was the reply. "The Crerar, in Chicago. Last Winter."

"You're Mr. Whitney, then!" she cried in sudden understanding. "Donald Whitney."

"That's my name. Here, let me help you out. But how did you know me? You haven't even seen my face. For goodness sake, what does all this mean?"

"Where is your ship?" demanded Georgia, for the first time seeing the possibilities of help in the suppression of the mutiny on the *Anywhere*. "Have you a big crew? Where are they? Hurry, before it is too late."

"Listen," said Whitney, speaking coolly for the first time. "We both seem to be too flustered to get at the facts. And you're all wet. Hold this light for a moment while I carry your canoe out of the way of the tide and this coming blow, and then we'll get up to my camp where you can dry out and be warm."

He had been emptying and carrying the canoe back toward the rocks, Georgia, carrying her emergency food, following and lighting his way with the electric torch. He laid the little craft down, bottom side up, and placed several large stones upon it.

"Wind blows here all the time, it seems," he explained. "But now it will be safe. Come," and he took the flash and guided the girl back along the beach and up into the rocks beyond.

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Georgia heard the rush of water and as they turned sharply to the right she saw a stream emptying into the stream beside her. Beside the creek, sheltered by high, overhanging rocks, blazed a little fire of driftwood.

"This is my home for the night," explained Whitney as he placed more wood on the fire. "Stand there and get dry and I'll start the tea boiling and dish up some stew. It's only plain boiled caribou without salt or anything else?"

"Then you haven't a ship, or any crew?" cried Georgia in dismay.

"My ship is an eighteen-foot canoe and my crew are two Chippewayans, Charley and Eltsi. They're up the south branch of the river flowing out of Baker Lake with the other canoe and won't be here until tomorrow night. I couldn't believe it was they when I heard you but never imagined it could be any one else. I thought I had this country to myself."

Georgia saw that Whitney had no realization of the real peril she and her father and David and Rollin faced, and that if she were to gain his assistance that night she must act at once.

"Mr. Whitney," she began quietly. "My name is Georgia Temple. My father is John Robinson Temple, of Chicago. With my brother, Rollin, and Dr. David Baird, a friend of the family, we left Boston in April and arrived in this bay four days ago in the search for a supposed tribe of Indians believed to have Norse blood in their veins."

"Norse!" interrupted Whitney. "That is why you wanted those books. Were you after them too? I'm afraid, Miss Temple, that I beat you to it. I found them three weeks ago, have been living with them for two weeks."

"Oh!" cried Georgia in dismay. "You found them! Then father can't be first!"

In her consternation she forgot momentarily her danger. Then a thought struck her and she exclaimed:

"But how could you have done that? Our ship entered the inlet as soon as any could have done so, and we haven't seen a sign of any one else."

"That's because I came up from the south, across country, from Lake Athabasca. I traveled by dog team as far as Dubawnt Lake and then came the rest of the way by canoe. I found the Indians back on a stream running into Baker Lake and just now I'm on my way to look for that stone village the reports spoke of, and which the Indians mentioned several times. Why, I had no idea any one else would be after the white Indians."

"White Indians!" repeated Georgia. "That's what we have called them. And are they really white? Do they show strains of the Norsemen?"

"Quite decidedly, a few of them, though a thousand years has done a great deal to wipe it out."

"Anyhow, we beat you to the village," interrupted Georgia.

"Rollin and father found it yesterday morning."

"They did! Where?"

"In the big bay right east of here."

"And I lost out by two days, eh? Well, I can't complain, nor can either of us. We can divide the discovery. You would have found the Indians too, without a doubt."

"But we didn't think you cared about ethnology," said Georgia.

"You looked me up, eh?" Whitney laughed. "I guess nothing in my past life ever led any one to believe I had a very serious interest in anything except big game. A Hudson's Bay Company post-manager with whom I Wintered a year ago was quite dippy on ethnology so far as it touched Indians and he got me started. Then, when I saw Larson's letter——

"But I say, Miss Temple! Isn't this the most remarkable thing you ever heard of? We meet by chance in the Crerar Library in Chicago and then again up here at the end of Chesterfield Inlet where white men practically never come."

"It's quite natural when you think of all the features of the case," said Georgia. "Larson's letter started us both. We went to the library for references and asked for the same books. Then you started and we came the other way."

"Well, perhaps," he exclaimed impulsively, "but nevertheless, Miss Temple, some sort of a Providence had a hand in it! Why, if a man had stepped down from Mars and sat beside my camp-fire here tonight, I could not have been more surprised than to see you here in the flesh."

He stopped in sudden confusion and turned his face away from the fire in a search for more wood.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Temple," he said. "A man gets sort of bushy when

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he stays off alone without a white man for several months."

"Pardon!" repeated Georgia, who had not caught the meaning of his words. "Not at all. It is a Providence that led us together tonight. I've started to tell it but we have been too excited. But the crew of our ship mutinied today."

"Mutinied! Why?"

She then told him of the Spanish treasure-ship and the demands of Volberg's crew.

"How did you get away from them?" asked Whitney.

"One of the men showed me how I could get away. I expected to paddle straight ashore and find father and David, but I must have been carried miles down the coast. I had about given up being able to make it when I was carried on to the beach and saw your fire."

"THAT WAS the tide. It runs strongly here, I have noticed. Well, the thing to do is to get to your father and Dr. Baird and then regain control of the ship, if possible. But how about your brother? Where is he?"

"Rollin got hold of some whisky today," said Georgia after a moment's hesitation.

"I see," said Whitney quickly. "He's still on board and probably may be of service. There's this sailor, too. That makes two on the ship and three on shore, not counting yourself. Tomorrow night at the latest I'll have my two men here, though I don't think we can count much on the Chippewayans. That will make seven of us, five on shore. How many are there in the crew?"

"There are nine, counting the mate and not Ed Garst, the seaman who helped me get away. The captain is ill."

"We have one factor that may help us to overbalance their greater numbers," said Whitney. "They don't know I'm on earth, and we may be able to give them a surprise or two."

Something in his tone, after he had recovered from his astonishment and had sensed the seriousness of Georgia's position, and the competent manner in which he built up the fire, hung a kettle in the blaze and began a search through his packs, brought quick hope to the girl. That he was busy planning as he worked was shown by his quick questions.

"They'll have to leave some one aboard, won't they?" he asked.

And then answering it himself, he hurried on:

"Of course they will, but not many. Maybe only one. But if they leave several it will divide their party, and if they leave the ship in charge of only one there is a chance of capturing it. Here's some hot tea. That will warm you up."

He passed a tin cup of black, steaming liquid and then stood watching the girl as she took her first sip.

"Bitter, eh?" he laughed when he saw her wry face. "That's the only way they make tea in the North country. But it'll do you good. Drink it down."

"Now the first thing to do is to get into touch with your father and Dr. Baird," he continued. "They probably will stay right on shore where they were left. It wouldn't do them any good to leave, and they're worrying about you, of course. You haven't any idea how far you came in the canoe?"

"Not in the least. It was too dark. But I imagine it was less than an hour in time."

"Three or four miles at the most, then. Wish I'd paid a little attention to the coast as I came along this afternoon. There is a big point two or three miles ahead, and that's probably the west point of the bay you speak of and your ship is right behind it. What lies back of the shore-line I didn't notice. Where is this village? Back at the head of the bay?"

"No," explained Georgia. "Out on the point and on the east side. It is sheltered by cliffs except on the southeast, and the only passage into the level spot where the village stood is through a cleft in the rocks on the south."

"Where do you think we would find your father and David?"

"Just before dark they were on shore back of the beach at the head of the bay."

Whitney ladled some of the hot stew on to a plate and handed it to Georgia.

"I can't believe this!" he exclaimed suddenly. "It isn't real. It isn't possible, To see you there in the Crerar and then, eight months later, have you appear beside my camp-fire in this out-of-the-way corner of the world. It's the most uncanny thing I ever heard of."

"It's the most fortunate thing I ever heard of," answered Georgia. "I don't know what would have happened to me if I hadn't been carried ashore right where I was."

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Whitney sat down and watched the girl. She was hungry but she ate little more than half of the helping. The young man laughed.

"Don't like it, eh? Wish I had thought to cook some of your own food but this needed only to be heated. It's all I've had, except fish and some ptarmigan, and bannock once a week, since I left Athabasca in March. And there were several times when I was glad to get the meat."

"And you stood that for months just to find the white Indians?" cried Georgia.

"Oh, that was more of a sporting proposition, I'm afraid. 'It wasn't the gold that I wanted so much as just finding the gold,' " he quoted. "If I had ever thought for a moment that any one who really cared about them wanted to get here first, I wouldn't have thought of coming. But I had never been quite so far and this served as a good excuse."

"But you started so quickly. Father tried to get you the next night at the Illinois Athletic Club and they said you had gone. He said that if you intended to search for the tribe you might as well come with us."

"Now I am disappointed!" he cried. "I'm afraid I do act on impulse too often. But my quick start was due to a knowledge of the country I would have to travel and the time it would take. I knew that if I ever got up here and back the same year I would have to go as far as Dubawnt at least before the ice went.

"But we haven't time for this any more. We can talk it all over when we get back aboard the ship. Just now we must find your father and Dr. Baird and then see what we can do to this unruly crew. Can't you eat any more?"

"No, I'm ready," and Georgia rose to her feet. "Is that the wind?"

"Yes, it's come up quite strong since we left the beach. We may have a little trouble in the canoe."

They did have trouble. Whitney had seen Georgia's blistered hands when she held them to the fire and he would not let her paddle. He cached his own supplies farther up the creek before starting and also carried Georgia's canoe to a place where it could not be seen from the water. But once they were started the tide and wind made progress so slow, and the going so wet from the flying spray, Georgia did not believe they could make their objective.

She sat huddled near the bow, a waterproof canvas bedsheet tucked in around her, her head down so that she could not see what was happening. Only the quick forward thrusts of the canoe as Whitney drove it against the wind, the sudden, dizzy leaps as the bow climbed a wave, the sickening, crashing thuds as it dropped into the trough, the splatter of salt water on the canvas covering, these alone were all that Georgia knew for an hour. She could not speak to the man in the stern nor hear his voice in the whip of the wind. She was too cold to change her position, even though water sloshed about in the bottom and soaked her.

The seas grew worse, the dizzy climbing and crashing of the canoe more terrifying, the forward thrusts less vigorous. But all the time one stroke followed another with the tirelessness of a motor. In time Georgia came to believe thy were even more regular and far more reliable than any gas engine could be. Despite the increased turbulence of the water, she began to have confidence.

Then suddenly the canoe whirled swiftly sidewise as it lifted to a wave. For a long moment it hung poised, then swayed and sank rapidly. Involuntarily Georgia threw back the canvas.

"Keep quiet!" came a sharp voice. "Don't move!"

The craft now leaped forward in alternate rushes and slow, dragging movements as if it were gripped from behind. The water boiled and snarled beneath her but the spray no longer rattled on the canvas.

SUDDENLY the long, rushing leaps ceased. The canoe remained even and shot forward with strong, quick thrusts. There was a swirl of the paddle, a sudden turn and drag, and Georgia felt the the bow grate on gravel.

"Here we are!" whispered Whitney as he pulled off the bedsheet. "I'm afraid you got pretty wet out there, and all for nothing."

"Nothing! Why? Where are we?"

Georgia got slowly to her feet and stepped out. She was trembling with the cold so that she could hardly stand, and Whitney reached out to help her.

"The wind and tide together were too strong for me to make the point," he answered. "And I don't know whether we could have stood it if we had. We had shelter all the way."

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"Shelter!" she repeated. "I was sure we would never reach land again."

"When you travel some of these big Northern lakes in an eighteen-footer you learn what a canoe can do," he laughed. "A good man in the bow and we would have made it. Now I wonder where we are, exactly."

"Don't you know? asked Georgia in alarm.

"Only in a way. I headed straight for the point, expecting to go around it and into the bay. As it was I couldn't make it and turned back to the shore west of the point. That's where we are now, and I imagine the site of the village is right over there beyond that hill," and he pointed in the darkness.

"Are you planning on waiting until the wind goes down?"

"No, we can't do that. The nights are too short, even now. We've got to get across this point to the head of the bay by land. I wonder if you can make it."

"I'll have to," said Georgia, her teeth chattering, "and I must do something or I will freeze."

"That's the way to talk. You wait here a moment until I find a place where I can hide the canoe. Those sailors may start looking for you in the morning and we don't want them spying my little craft. I'll have to be the 'X' in this problem if I'm to do anything at all,"

He returned in five minutes, tucked the paddles into the bow, lifted the canoe to his shoulders and again went off in the darkness. Georgia paced up and down the beach in an effort to get warm and when Whitney came back she had ceased trembling.

"Now," he began, "it's straight up over this hill until we get on to the high land back from shore. It's dark, and it's going to be a rough climb, but we have to make it. Let me take your hand. *Whew!* You're cold! We'll have to hurry and start the blood circulating. There is some driftwood here but we don't dare build a fire or even strike a match."

Georgia's hand in his, he started back across the beach and in a moment they began to climb. Twice he was forced to turn back and find a new passage up the rocks. The last time he went back to the beach and walked farther east until he struck a gully. Up this they went, scrambling and slipping over rocks and moss, stumbling on in the darkness until at last they reached a level spot.

Even the exhausting hour spent in the canoe seemed to have in no way diminished Whitney's strength and he maintained his same pace although again and again he was compelled to drag Georgia up steep inclines or lift her bodily over rocks.

The tireless energy of the man served to bring warmth and comfort to the girl as much as the strenuous exercise. For the first time since Volberg had looked up at her through the forecastle hatchway her terror began to decrease. While she knew perfectly well that the situation was as perilous as ever, there was a faith-compelling grip in the hand that held hers and an assurance of safety in the arms that so easily lifted her to the height of her head.

"Now," said Whitney when they were at the top of the hill, "just what do you know about the location of this village and the land around it?"

Georgia explained as best she could the topography of the country as she had seen it from shipboard and as her father and Rollin had described the more intimate details of the village itself.

"Then the thing for us to do," said Whitney when she had finished, "is to cross back to the base of the point and then turn east along the rock wall. That will bring us to the opening that leads into the village, from where it will be easy to find the beach. If your father and Dr. Baird are still there, and have been left without bedding or supplies, they will undoubtedly keep close to the beach where they may get driftwood for a fire. Ready?"

He turned and led the way back from the shore and at the beginning of the next rise turned to the left. For a mile they stumbled along in the darkness, turning only to avoid gullies and rock barriers.

"Are you sure we are going in the right direction?" asked Georgia after half an hour.

"Pretty sure. There isn't anything to guide a person in this darkness, but we'll have to trust to my not getting turned around."

"But how do you know which is the right direction? I haven't the least idea where we are."

"I guess a man develops the sense after he's traveled in strange places. It's hard to explain, but I simply have a feeling that the beach is over there and that I'm going toward it. Maybe I've unconsciously kept

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track of all the turns and twists we've made, and maybe it's a sixth sense. I can't tell why. I'm sure, is all."

He kept on, Georgia close at his heels. At last they came out on a level, open place and Whitney turned toward the left.

"This is probably the wall," he said when they found themselves standing beneath a dark shadow. "Now we'll have to keep watch for the opening."

In a few minutes he turned straight into the blackness and when he spoke Georgia heard his voice echoing as from a cavern.

"This is it, I think," he called. "Come on and we'll have a look at the enclosure. They may be camped in here."

They followed the twists and turns of the passage and at last came out in the comparative lightness of the opening.

"No fire here," said Whitney. "We'd better try the beach."

The beach was harder to find as they did not keep far enough to the right. The sound of waves beating against the shore became louder and finally they were halted by the fear of stepping off a cliff into the bay.

"Wait until I climb that rock to the right," said Whitney. "I may be able to see the beach from there."

When at last Georgia heard him coming back she whispered eagerly—

"Did you see them?"

"Yes, they are lying beside a big fire of driftwood at the east end of the beach, in the shelter of some rocks. But there are three sailors sitting on the other side of the fire, and they are all armed."

CHAPTER VIII

DONALD PLANS AN ATTACK

"SAILORS!" exclaimed Georgia. "There on shore with them!"

"There are five men around the camp-fire and it couldn't be any one else," said Whitney. "The mate probably discovered your absence and knew you would try to join your father. So he sent men ashore to head you off."

"But what are we to do now?"

"Get back to my camp as quickly as possible. We can't be seen around here after daylight, which will be here before long. If Charley and Eltsi were only here.

"They have the only rifles we brought. I left them behind to get some meat as we were nearly out of provisions, and I came on in search of the village without a weapon, never thinking I would need it. With a rifle I could sneak down close to the fire and cover those men before they knew I was around. The rest would be easy, and we could have their arms and put three of the crew out of the running. But we must hurry. Come on."

Whitney turned back at once on the way they had come. Georgia was tired but responded with all her strength. Despite their efforts, however, the early dawn caught them before they regained the shore.

"There's nothing to it except to go the rest of the way by land," said Whitney as they looked down at the inlet from the hill they had first climbed in the night. "We can't risk being seen out on the water. Feel able to make it?"

"Let's rest a little first," pleaded the girl. "Why must we go back to your camp?"

"It's the only place where we can get food, and we don't want to be too near the village when those seamen get on shore after daylight. You must be kept out of sight by all means. Then they'll think you are drowned or lost. And our chances of surprise depend upon their never suspecting that I am in the country. Besides, you need rest and back there you can be comfortable and safe."

After a while Georgia rose to her feet and Whitney led the way eastward, keeping back among the hills where there was no chance of their being seen. At six o'clock, by Georgia's wrist watch, they reached his camp. The girl was now really hungry and began to open the emergency rations.

Whitney insisted that he could do very well with the meat alone and that she keep the food to which she was more accustomed. But Georgia, disregarding him entirely, took one of the kettles, hung some of the condensed soup over the blaze and set out pilot bread, chocolate and raisins. When the soup was hot she invited him to sit down.

"Honestly, I can't believe it, such a feast," he said. "I'd forgotten there was such food. But I'm only going to taste of it. You may have to go several days on what we have here, and you don't like boiled caribou without salt."

"Please don't," begged Georgia, but there was no need of her urging.

When the sweet things had entirely

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disappeared she leaned back and laughed.

"Don't apologize!" she cried when she saw the look of consternation on his face. "I don't know when I've seen any one enjoy food as you have. It was worth a week of saltless meat."

"It was good," he admitted sheepishly. "I just couldn't help it. I haven't had a taste of sugar for three months.

"But it's getting late. You crawl into my blankets in the tent and get some sleep."

"But what are you going to do?" she protested.

"I'm going back to the site of the village and keep track of things. There may be a chance to separate your father and Dr. Baird from the others and bring them here. In any event, I'll know what is going on. When my Indians come back with the rifles I'll be able to act."

The night had been so filled with strenuous physical exertions Georgia's anxiety could not keep her awake. She pulled the blankets about her and before the sound of Whitney's feet on the loose stones across the creek had died away she was fast asleep.

How long she slept she did not know. Suddenly she found herself awake, sitting up in bed. No sound came to her for a moment, and then, just in front of the tent, a man spoke. The girl's first thought was that some of Volberg's crew had found her and she sat staring at the closed flaps of the tent, expecting any instant to have them thrown open.

Then the man spoke again, a queer, guttural, harsh voice. The words were unintelligible, if the queer sounds could be words, and another voice answered. Instantly the girl threw back the blankets and thrust her head out through the tent door.

As she had expected, it was the two Indians who had followed Whitney down the shore and found his camp. But her joy in the discovery was short-lived. As she looked out the two men heard the sound in the tent and turned. For a moment they stared. Then one crossed himself quickly, mumbling in terror, while the other sprang to his feet and retreated toward the shore.

"It's all right!" Georgia exclaimed. "Mr. Whitney has gone but he will be back soon."

The second Indian now retreated after the other, and no assurances on Georgia's part seemed to allay their most evident terror. She saw that they did not understand what she said, but she was unable to imagine the cause of their fear of her.

"Charley," she said. "Eltsi," and she beckoned to them.

The Indians glanced at each other in wonder at this use of their names, but they did not come nearer. Georgia beckoned again as she emerged from the little tent. Then she pointed to Whitney's packs, swept an arm toward the east, held out her wrist watch and indicated the time when she expected their employer to return.

But nothing she could do reassured the two Indians. They went back to the mouth of the gully and stood there. She found a seat on a stone beside the now dead fire and pretended to ignore them. After a moment she heard the low murmur of their voices and looked to see them discussing something in evident fear and wonder. At last they both turned down to the shore.

Georgia knew that for some reason, in some way, she had frightened the Indians but she had not thought that they might leave. She jumped to her feet and followed, arriving at the beach just in time to see them shoving off the canoe. It was heavily loaded with meat, and two rifles could be seen resting against the thwarts.

"Come back!" she called. "Don't go! He'll be here soon. Nothing will hurt you."

At the sound of her voice the men began to paddle. The canoe drew away from shore, was turned and headed back the way it had come.

"Miss Temple!" came a voice from the gully. "Miss Temple! Where are you?"

The next instant Whitney rushed out upon the beach.

"Good Lord!" he cried in relief. "I thought the sailors had found you and taken you off. What's that? Why, it's Charley and Eltsi."

"They are afraid of me," explained Georgia quickly. "Call them back. Quick!"

"Afraid! Oh, I see. They probably took you for some sort of a spirit. Oh, boys," and he began to speak in their own language.

The canoe stopped, but the men did not offer to return. Whitney jabbered on, hesitating at times for words but making himself understood. The men answered, Whitney explained, and for five minutes the colloquy, wholly unintelligible to Georgia, continued. At last the young man turned to her with a smile.

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"Took you for some sort of a spirit, I don't know whether evil or otherwise, when they saw your head thrust out of the tent," he explained. "I've told them that I knew you in your own country and that you came up here by the sea and are in trouble. For some reason or other they don't seem to believe it all, but they'll come back. I certainly arrived just in time, didn't I?"

"What would we have done if they had gone?" asked Georgia.

"Don't know, I'm sure. It would have left us in a bad hole, for six of the crew spent the day on shore, guarding your father and Dr. Baird and digging around in the village. We've got to act tonight. They may get impatient when they don't find the treasure.

"The mate, Volberg, came ashore in the morning. After lunch he sent a boat off down the shore, to the east, probably in search of you."

"What can we do?" asked Georgia in consternation.

"Oh, we're not so badly off," he replied cheerfully. "I got one bit of good news. Those sailors we saw by the fire last night didn't have rifles, only long clubs. They have revolvers, though, I am sure, but I saw only one rifle among them."

"There were only two on board that I know of," said Georgia. "We brought them for hunting."

"That's fine!" exclaimed Whitney.

Georgia looked at him perplexedly and he hastened to explain:

"It's this way. Those men may have revolvers, but I wouldn't be much afraid of any man at fifty feet with an unaccustomed revolver in his hands. There is no reason to believe that those sailors can shoot. So I could stand one hundred yards away and pick them off with my Springfield like so many partridges in a tree."

"But you don't know that they can't shoot," protested Georgia. "Isn't there a safer way?"

"That's the only reason I'm not going to do it," he answered. "I don't want to take any chances on leaving you alone until I get your father and Dr. Baird free."

THE INDIANS had beached the canoe and now at Whitney's command began to carry the meat up to the camp-site. When they passed Georgia they gave her a wide berth, and all the time they were on the beach they did not look in any direction but toward her.

"If you'd stub your toe and cry about it they might take you for a human being," Whitney laughed. "As it is, I'm afraid they're going to be quite shy in your presence."

When they were back in camp and the Indians were busy cooking, Whitney turned to Georgia.

"Now, Miss Temple," he said, "I'm going to send you back into the country with Charley, up this creek for a mile or two. I was crazy to leave you alone here this morning. Saw my mistake when Volberg sent that boat along the shore to the east looking for you. If they had come this way you wouldn't have been here when I got back. He is sure to be down here this afternoon. Must have given you credit for being able to paddle against the current and to reach your father. He surely knew the tide was in when you left the ship."

"You're not going back to the village now?" asked Georgia.

"Yes, right away, and I'll take Eltsi with me. Eltsi means moon in Chippewayan, Miss Temple, and it is not a bad idea to have one along on these dark nights."

It was a poor attempt at a joke, and Whitney knew it as well as Georgia. But the girl recognized in it merely an awkward attempt to keep up her spirits, something which had characterized his attitude from the beginning, and she laughed heartily. He grinned with pleasure at this revival of her courage and, the meat having been broiled, he turned gaily and helped the girl to her portion.

"But you haven't had any sleep, and you should take a rest before you go back," Georgia said when they were eating. "It's only two o'clock now, and you can get in several hours sleep before dark."

"I'm all right," he assured her. "The excitement is keeping me awake and, besides, I want to be on the ground before they leave for the ship. It's always well to know the number and position of your enemy."

When the meal was finished Whitney helped the Indians carry the meat they had brought to a safe place in the rocks. Georgia's canoe was concealed in a better hiding-place and then Charley was loaded with the tent, bedding and other camp paraphernalia and started up the gorge with Georgia.

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"Better stay until I send for you," Whitney said as she started.

"Why not come back at dark," she suggested. "They won't be searching for me then, and I want to be here when you bring father back."

"Well," he hesitated, "but wait until it is really dark. There is no need to take chances."

He waved good-by, crossed the creek with Eltsi and started up the opposite bank. Georgia watched him for a moment and then followed the heavily loaded Indian.

Having made the trip three times since dawn, Donald Whitney lost no time in covering the three miles of hills and gullies to the side of the village. Once he made a detour to have a look out over the inlet. As he came out to the crest of a hill he suddenly dropped flat on his face, at the same time whispering to the Indian to do likewise.

A hundred yards out from the shore below him was a boat with four sailors rowing and Volberg in the stern steering.

"We certainly got out of that creek bed just in time," gasped the young man as he peered around a boulder. "The mate is going to find her or know the reason why. But she's safe enough now, and that takes five of the nine men away from the beach. Now's my chance."

He crawled back and went on faster than ever toward the bay to the east. No quest for big game had ever been so exciting as this, even without the added incentive of his protection and rescue of Georgia Temple.

This last was to Donald Whitney something more than a sudden and unexpected responsibility. Though he had seen Georgia in the wilderness for the first time when she had appeared at his camp-fire the night before, in his dreams she had been with him through the long months of his toilsome journey north from Edmonton.

"The Crerar girl," he had come to call her, for the picture he had seen in the Crerar Library that January morning had persisted in his mind. He had been back in civilization only three weeks when Larson's letter had furnished the excuse for another journey into the North. He had met some girls in that time, but this absence of two years had made him hypercritical rather than easy prey.

None had interested him until that morning in the library, when he had chanced to glance up and see Georgia watching him. For a time the object of his visit to the Crerar was forgotten, and when the girl spoke, though it were only a request for some of the books, he felt in the meeting something more than the chance contact of two persons.

Donald Whitney had spent so much of his life in out-of-the-way places, had seen so little of women, there had remained in him something of the boyish romanticism every youth knows for a time. While this single glimpse of Georgia had not been enough to keep him in the city, it had wrought his imagination to the point where a picture of her face persisted in many camp-fires, each a little farther North. It was a lonely journey, down the Peace, across the length of frozen Athabasca, over the divide and down to Dubawnt Lake, lonely, frost-gripped, heart-breaking in its obstacles and hardships.

The mind plays queer pranks in such solitude and in the face of such physical endeavor and mental monotony. There is a lack of stimuli that permits the thoughts to dwell for hours upon trivial incidents of the day or less consequential happenings of years before. The plod, plod, plod of snowshoes, the constant grip of the cold, the supreme effort, the long nights, all serve to dull the mind except in so far as it is needed for daily tasks.

It was when in this condition that the picture of Georgia's flushed, eager face, framed in its coils of flaxen hair, appeared often in the blaze of Donald's camp-fire. When Spring came and he and his Indians took to their canoes, it faded gradually until it had become only a memory, a memory brought to vivid, wondrous reality by the appearance of the girl herself from out of the darkness.

Consequently, though Donald knew very well that he was on a dangerous expedition, it was with a glad, singing heart that he crept up to the crest of a slight rise and looked down upon the beach.

The morning had been fair, but in the middle of the afternoon the wind had shifted to the north and, blowing off the cold water and the floating ice that still remained at the head of the inlet, rapidly condensed the moisture in the air. The resulting fog was even heavier than the mist that usually enshrouds that coast throughout the brief Summer, when distances are so deceptive

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Indians from the interior have been known to stalk caribou in vain until they became accustomed to the new conditions.

For a few minutes as Donald looked down he could see nothing. Then the wind eddied the mist to one side and he caught a glimpse of the beach. Lying beside a fire at the eastern end were two figures which he took to be Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird. Sitting on a rock beyond the blaze, their backs to the low cliff that sheltered them on the east, were three men. Across the knees of one lay a rifle.

The fog shut off the group as quickly as it had revealed it, but the glimpse had been enough for Donald. He turned and whispered to Eltsi, who lay beside him, and both crawled back until the crest of the hill permitted them to rise. Then, jumping to their feet, they started eastward.

Donald's plan was simple and easy. He had only to creep up to the top of the rocks above the men and, with Eltsi beside him, cover the sailors with their rifles and command the guards to lay down their weapons. There was no danger of Eltsi making a noise on such a stalk, and Donald had crept up on a wary quarry too often to believe he would fail now. The sailors, believing they had only the two men before them to watch, never suspecting the presence of another white man within hundreds of miles, could hardly be expected to be on their guard.

When at last Donald thrust his head over the rocks, after fifteen minutes of creeping and climbing, he found the group exactly as he had seen it before, except that one of the sailors had risen to place more wood on the fire. He motioned to Eltsi to move up beside him and then, satisfied that the time had come, suddenly shouted:

"Put up your hands, you three! Don't make any other moves or I'll shoot!"

CHAPTER IX

VOLBERG SCORES

INSTEAD of obeying, the sailors leaped to their feet and looked upward. Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird lifted themselves to a sitting position and stared in amazement at the rock from which the voice had come.

"Lay down that rifle!" commanded Donald, and he fired at a point between the feet of the sailor who, clearly dumfounded by this incomprehensible turn of events, still grasped his weapon as he stared upward.

The man instantly laid the rifle on the ground.

"That's better," said Donald. "Now, Dr. Baird, you know whether these men have revolvers. Please search them. Take their knives, too."

"Have you been on the ship?" cried Mr. Temple, recovering from his astonishment and realizing that this stranger's use of David's name indicated some familiarity with the situation. "Where is Georgia? Is she safe?"

"Your daughter is perfectly safe, Mr. Temple," answered Donald, "but Volberg still holds the ship. That's right, Doctor. Now you men walk over to the other side of the fire, put up your hands and stand with your backs to me. No, farther. That's it. Now, not a move."

He spoke to Eltsi, first in English so that the sailors would understand, and then in Chippewayan—

"Shoot the first one who lets down his hands or starts away."

Donald lowered himself over the edge of the rock.

"Where on earth did you come from?" demanded Mr. Temple.

"Just a minute, please," answered Donald, and he nodded toward the three seamen. "Are you sure you got all their weapons, Dr. Baird?"

"Each one had a revolver and a knife, and here is the rifle," said David. "I am sure there is nothing more. Where is Miss Temple?"

Donald placed a finger on his lips, shook his head, and then asked—

"Where is the boat these men came ashore in?"

"Right down the beach there. You can just see it in the fog."

"I see. Now, you men, march straight ahead toward the boat. The rest of you follow me."

"Hurry up, you fellows," he commanded. Move along. Now get hold of that boat and shove her into the water. No funny moves, any of you. There. That's enough. Now, Mr. Temple, you and Dr. Baird get into the boat. Each of you take an oar. Eltsi," and he spoke in the Indian's language, "get in and hold the boat off so that the bow doesn't touch the beach. Keep her there until I come back."

"Now," and he spoke in English again,

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"you three men march along the shore. Lively. I'm right behind you."

As Mr. Temple and David got into the boat and helped the Indian hold it off, Donald started down the beach behind the seamen. In a moment he disappeared in the fog. The others waited, wondering what he had planned, when suddenly he appeared running toward them.

"All right!" he called as he plunged into the water, shoved the bow out and jumped into the boat. "Pull away, quick! Here, Mr. Temple, let me have that oar. I'm a little more accustomed to it. It was too bad we couldn't make prisoners of those three, but they would have had to be guarded and we can't spare the time or the man to do it. If we get control of the ship we've got to hurry, and, once we do, we can make terms with the crew later."

He laid his rifle against a seat and relieved Mr. Temple of a task which most evidently was more than the older man could handle easily. With his vigorous pulling and the clumsy but strong efforts of Dr. Baird, the boat rapidly drew away from the shore and soon was shut in entirely by the fog.

"Who on earth are you and where is Georgia?" demanded Mr. Temple.

"My name is Whitney and your daughter is perfectly safe," answered Donald in a low tone. "Please don't ask questions or talk, and, Dr. Baird, make just as little noise as possible with your oar. We've got to hurry to get control of the ship before Volberg comes back, and we mustn't let those on board know we are out here in a boat."

"Whitney! Not Donald Whitney?"

"Yes, but please keep quiet, Mr. Temple. Sound travels a long way in the fog. I'll explain later."

Donald whispered to Eltsi in Chippewayan and the boat turned sharply to the left.

"I'd have the Indian take your oar, Doctor," he whispered over his shoulder, "but his eyes are better in the fog."

In a few minutes a straight, high shore appeared ahead and Eltsi turned to the right, keeping just far enough out to have the cliffs in view. They were beneath the site of Snorri Gellison's village and for fifteen minutes they continued to row, Eltsi clinging close to the shore while they went on out around the point. Donald, after many glances over his shoulder, at last instructed the Indian to turn in toward a short strip of beach.

"That's it," he said as the boat grounded. "Stay here until I come back."

He picked up his rifle, jumped out and went back toward the cliffs. In a few minutes those in the boat saw him returning, a canoe on his shoulders. He launched it at once and shoved out.

"You must have a ship and a crew!" exclaimed Mr. Temple, no longer able to keep quiet.

"Please don't talk," admonished Donald sharply. "Volberg and his men are down this shore in a boat and may be returning any moment. We must keep quiet, and we must get out to the ship before he returns, if possible. I'll explain everything later. Just now success depends upon silence and speed."

"Now," he continued, still in a whisper as he leaned over the boat's gunwale, "I'll tell what I have planned. Last night, luckily, Miss Temple and I had to leave this canoe here. I'll take it and paddle out to the north side of the ship. You three follow the shore back to the point, turn around it until you are between the *Anywhere* and the beach and then make straight for it. The ship hasn't been moved since last night, has it?"

"Not when the fog shut in," answered David. "It was right in the mouth of the bay, not far from the point we rounded and about half a mile from the beach."

"Good," said Donald. "Now, you two row and Eltsi will steer. Make a little noise with the oars when you get directly between the ship and the beach, but not before. You must be perfectly quiet until then. Row slowly. Take it easy and you won't be liable to catch a crab or let any one on board see that you are not accustomed to using an oar.

"As I figure it, there is only one man on board. Volberg with four men is east of us along this shore, looking for Miss Temple. But I have sent her inland with my other Indian on the chance that he would do that very thing. There are three men on shore, making eight of them altogether."

"But there are ten," interrupted David.

"Ten! That's right. I didn't count in Garst, the man who helped Miss Temple escape. He's with us."

"He is one of the three we left on shore."

"That's where I blundered," confessed

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Donald readily. "Well, I guess I can handle the two on board anyhow. I'm going to take the canoe and paddle around so as to come on the *Anywhere* from the other side. I can get aboard while they're watching for you to appear in the fog and cover them before they can make a move. But don't come too near the ship until I hail you that it's all right. I might fail to find it right away in the fog, and if I don't I'll try to come back to the point, and you do the same if you don't hear me in twenty minutes. Now I'll tell the Indian the plan.

"All right," said Donald to the others when he had finished his instructions to the Indian. "Now we'll row out to the point."

THERE they separated, Donald paddling straight out and the others turning down into the bay. His task was by far the more difficult. While they had the shore to use as a starting-point and could row straight for the ship, he would be forced to make a half-circle around it and run the chance that he would strike it in the fog, which had thickened rapidly since they had left the beach at the head of the bay.

Donald did not attempt to circle, however. He paddled straight out until he judged that he had passed the *Anywhere* and then turned at right angles. After paddling in this direction for a few minutes he stopped and listened. For a moment there was no sound, and then he heard a noise that could have been made only by feet on a ship's deck. The ship, evidently, was right beside him, and he turned the canoe straight toward it and waited.

In a moment the sound of oars came plainly through the fog, and at once Donald began to paddle. Without taking his blade from the water he propelled the canoe swiftly and silently. After a few strokes he caught the dim outline of the ship to the left and turned so that he would strike the bow. As he came nearer and the fog thinned he watched closely for signs of any one on board. He heard voices, evidently from the other side, but no one was in sight.

Carefully he brought the canoe to rest directly underneath the bowsprit and again paused to listen. The sound of oars came plainly now, and he could hear voices on deck but well aft. He slipped a rope from the bow of the canoe over the lower bobstay, knotted it, and then stood up, his rifle in his hands.

The bobstays permitted easy climbing and in a moment his moccasined feet were on deck. In the waist of the ship, leaning against the rail, were two men looking shoreward, whence the sound of the oars now came plainly.

"Hands up, you fellows!" called Donald as he started swiftly aft. "Here! None of that!" and he stopped and threw the Springfield to his shoulder. "I've got you right, and I'll shoot quick. Turn around there. That's it. Keep them up. Now, don't move."

He kept the rifle pointed at the two astonished seamen as he approached and he did not turn his head as he called:

"All right. Come aboard. Hurry!"

"You fellows stand there as you are until some one can search you," he commanded as he stopped in front of them.

The sound of clattering, splashing oars came out of the fog and a minute later the boat drew alongside, striking with a bump that threw Mr. Temple back into David's lap. The shock sent the boat far out but Eltsi, using an oar as a paddle, drove it back, and David caught the Jacob's ladder and hung on while Mr. Temple climbed aboard. Eltsi slipped a rope through the ladder and in a moment they were all on deck.

"Now, Dr. Baird, search these men," said Donald. "Get everything they have that might be used as a weapon as we'll have to keep them prisoners. Mr. Temple, do you happen to have any handcuffs on board?"

"Handcuffs! No, nothing of the sort." was the reply.

"I think Captain Hewitt may have some," said David as he brought a rifle, two revolvers and two knives to Donald. "A ship generally is equipped with such things. I'll go down to his stateroom and see."

He reappeared in a few minutes with two pairs which, at Donald's nod, he snapped upon the wrists of the two seamen.

"Better put them in the forecastle," suggested Donald. "Is either one of these the engineer?"

"No, he must be with Volberg," said David.

"That means a valuable man missing, but it doesn't make a great deal of difference. I could do it if I had to. Mr. Temple, do you know where your son is?"

"He must be on board somewhere. Wasn't he in the cabin, David?"

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"No, and I looked in the staterooms, too," was the anxious reply. "Captain Hewitt is just as we left him and seems to be all right. I'll see if Rollin is in the forecastle."

"It was as I expected," he said when he returned. "Rollin has been drinking. The supply was exhausted, or they shut off on him, and he's in rather bad shape. He's down there now, chained to a bunk. Asked me where he was and what had happened."

"We'll take these men down and chain them first and then see if we can get him loose," suggested Donald. "Come, you two. Get forward and into the forecastle. Mr. Temple, take that rifle and stay on deck with the Indian. Keep a sharp watch as Volberg may be back any time."

He repeated the instructions to Eltsi and then followed David and the two seamen into the forecastle.

"These fellows must have a key to that lock," he said. "Better search them, Doctor."

"It's in my pocket," one of the men offered.

David reached in for the key and quickly had the chains and handcuffs off Rollin's wrists.

"Use the same chain to tie these fellows," said Donald. "We can't spare any one to watch them and will have to keep them tied for a time."

By putting the men head to head in adjoining bunks and passing the chain which had tied Rollin around a stanchion, Donald was enabled to fasten the sailors securely.

"Now let's get on deck," he said as he led the way up the ladder.

Rollin was trembling so he could not climb without assistance.

"What's happened?" he demanded as he saw his father pacing the deck aft with a rifle and Eltsi stationed in the bow.

"As I told you, Volberg took command of the ship, kept your father and me ashore and made a prisoner of Georgia," answered David. "She escaped, ran into Mr. Whitney, here, I imagine, and he has rescued us and regained control of the ship. The crew are all ashore, or out in a boat, except the two we just chained in the forecastle."

ROLLIN, though trembling and with little physical control, was perfectly sober. The realization that through all these events, the danger to his sister and to his father and David, he had been lying drunk in the forecastle came as a shock which steadied him more effectively than a drug. He did not comment but, shaking off David's supporting arm, walked away to the rail and stood with his back to the others.

"Now, Doctor," began Donald at once, "there isn't any time to lose. The next thing is to get Miss Temple aboard. Volberg may show up any time, and he'll have to be kept off. He won't be able to understand that you are in control of the ship, so don't hesitate to convince him of it with a few shots if necessary. Even then he may make further attempts in the fog or darkness .tonight, and you'll have to keep a sharp watch, two men at least, all the time."

"Are you intending to go after Georgia alone? asked David.

"I think it will be better for several reasons. In the first place there are only you, Mr. Temple and Eltsi, my Indian, to guard the ship, unless Mr. Temple's son is able to help. Then, I can handle a canoe alone without difficulty, and when I come back I'll have a load anyhow, with Miss Temple, my other Indian and my camping outfit.

"Now, my camp was down the shore about three miles, on the first stream running into the inlet. For fear Volberg might be searching for her, I sent Miss Temple and Charley a couple of miles up the creek to keep hidden until tonight. Miss Temple was so anxious to see her father she said she would come back to the shore at dark. When she does I'll bring her to the ship. I've told you our plans so that, should anything happen to me, you can make another effort to get her aboard. I don't think there is any need to worry about her though as Charley is a good man and she knows her danger."

David had a number of questions he had wanted to ask of this energetic young man who had appeared so suddenly in the rôle of their rescuer, but he, too, saw the necessity of haste and he merely assented to what Donald had said.

"All right," he said. "I think we can promise that Volberg won't get the ship again. Plans as to what we will do afterward can be made when you get back with Georgia."

"Certainly, and, oh, yes, don't mistake us for Volberg when we come back tonight.

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I'll come in from the north, and I'll whistle three times like this."

"All right," said David. "We'll remember."

"Where's Georgia?" asked Rollin, who had suddenly turned away from the rail and joined them.

"Mr. Whitney has her hidden on shore and is going after her now," explained David.

"Can't I go along?" asked Rollin. "I've got to do something, quick."

He spoke tensely, his determination hiding his shame.

"No." answered Donald. "You are needed on the ship. Good-by, now. I'm going."

He picked up his rifle, ran into the bow, dropped into the bobstays and then into his canoe. David and Rollin, watching from the rail, saw him paddle quickly away and in a moment he was lost in the fog.

Donald knew the risk he ran in going down the shore. It was late in the afternoon and Volberg might be encountered at any moment. He knew that the other boat in returning would be forced to follow the shore to avoid becoming lost in the fog. He, too, must keep close to the cliffs or become hopelessly confused.

Consequently, as he paddled toward the point he made practically no noise, while both ears and eyes were strained for sound or sight of the mate's boat. He reasoned that Volberg would keep close enough to shore to have it in plain sight all the time, and that if he kept farther out in the canoe he had the better opportunity to slip away in the fog. He knew, too, that he had the advantage of being on his guard while Volberg would be hurrying along, wholly unsuspecting the presence of any other small craft on his course.

Donald kept so far out that twice he lost the shore and was forced to turn toward it until the dim outline of the cliffs again appeared. Once, when he feared that he had been turned around completely and could not get back, he was suddenly halted in his search by the sound of a voice.

So sharp and clear were the tones he turned in fear that he had been seen. But the gray circle of the fog was unbroken, even when he heard the voice again.

Donald waited until he caught the sound of oars and could estimate the direction the boat was taking. Then he turned at right angles to its course and paddled out until he believed he would be safe. As he rested, listening and watching intently, he could hear the boat pass him, though not once did he catch a glimpse of it. The sound of the oars, even the grunts of the men as they pulled, were plainly audible.

When the boat had passed Donald turned toward where he had first heard it and paddled until the shore again appeared. There was no danger now of encountering any one and he went on swiftly toward the east.

He had gone about a mile when the crack of a rifle echoed along the cliffs behind him. He stopped paddling, listening for more shots. None came, and at last he went on, confident that the single shot had meant that Volberg had attempted to go aboard and had been warned off.

Fifteen minutes later Donald reached the mouth of the little stream beside which he had camped and landed on the beach where Georgia had first touched shore. He pulled up the canoe and went at once into the gully. He did not expect to find the girl or Charley there and was crossing the camp-site with hardly more than a glance toward the spot where the fire had been when he was halted by the low "*Z-t-t*" of an Indian. He wheeled to see Charley coming down from the rocks above.

"Where is she?" he asked in Chippewayan.

"Five white men came in a boat and she went away with them."

CHAPTER X

UNEXPECTED ALLIES

"WITH Volberg!" cried Donald.

He stared at the Indian a moment and then, his knees suddenly becoming weak, his head swimming, he turned and groped for a seat on a rock.

For two days and a night he had been constantly on the go, paddling, climbing over the hills, always driven to his utmost by excitement or necessity. Now, unnerved by the knowledge that Georgia was again in Volberg's hands, robbed of the stimulus of success, which had met his every effort so far, he fell victim to the mental fatigue of discouragement and the physical lassitude of partial exhaustion.

As he sat there Charley climbed down from the rocks to his employer's side.

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"They took all the meat, too," he said.

"Who took it?"

"The white men with whom the girl went off in the boat."

Anger suddenly succeeded his despondency and Donald wheeled upon the Indian.

"Why did you let her go?" he demanded. "Didn't I tell you to keep her back until night?"

"It was not my fault," answered the Indian suddenly. "It was the Eskimos."

"Eskimos! Where?"

"Back where you told us to go. We had been there two hours, maybe less, and I went to see if any one was coming so that we might run away. I was watching toward the sea and then I looked behind and saw twenty men, maybe thirty, coming from the west. They were Eskimos, and you know what the Eskimos are."

Donald nodded impatiently. He understood perfectly the fear in which the Indians of the far North and the Eskimos, whose territory they border, hold each other because of the fierce tribal wars that had ceased less than a century before.

"Yes, yes!" he said. "What then?"

"I ran back and told her and led the way down here to the sea. The Eskimos were on land and we could get the canoe we hid and escape. When we were near here I waited a while to see if the Eskimos followed us. I did not see them and came on.

"At the top of the hill back there I looked down and saw the camping-place here, and she stood where you sit now. Then a big white man walked around the rock there. They talked and then they went down to the sea. I followed and saw four more white men and they all paddled away in a big boat."

"Where are these Eskimos now?" asked Donald.

"I went back to look but I could not find them."

"I think you have been seeing things in the fog, Charley."

"No, I am sure."

"How close were you?"

"I don't know. Just a little way."

"What makes you think they were Eskimos?"

"No Indians ever come here, only Eskimos. Every year they come through here to get wood up the Dubaunt and go over to the Big Fish River."

Donald questioned the Indian further and from the vague answers he could only believe that the Eskimos were rocks seen in the fog or whisps of vapor driven before the wind. He was perfectly familiar with the fear any Indian has when in the territory of another tribe, far from his own home, and he knew the inherent dread of the Chippewayan when anywhere near Eskimo haunts. This fear, he believed, prodded by imagination and the fog, had resulted in Charley's panic.

"Of course Miss Temple thought he meant Volberg's men were coming," Donald deducted, "and she ran as he directed, and right into the mate and his crew, who had just found this camping-spot."

The young man suddenly arose. He realized the task that lay before him. The knowledge that Georgia was again in the mate's power and that Volberg, driven to desperation by the loss of the ship, might resort to anything, served as the incentive for immediate action. There was only one thing to do, and that was to go to the beach, where Volberg undoubtedly would gather his forces that night, and rescue her at any cost.

"Come on, Charley," he said, starting toward the canoe.

Back down the coast Donald and the Indian paddled. The gray fog turned black before they reached the base of the point off which the *Anywhere* was anchored and the darkness became so intense that nothing at all could be seen. Donald at last found the short strip of beach where he and Georgia had landed the night before and where he had recovered his canoe after the rescue of Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird. Again he carried the canoe back to its hiding-place and, after a few instructions to Charley, started up the rocks with the Indian at his heels.

To the man accustomed to being in the wilderness and to finding his way about in strange places, progress is not nearly so difficult as the man unfamiliar with such work might suppose. This is especially true if he has been over the route once or twice before. The Indian, probably because his mind is open to nothing else, seems to retain a distinct memory of every footstep, even for several miles, and the white man who spends much time in Indian country, at Indian pursuits, more often than not out-Indians the Indian at his own game.

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Donald Whitney had hunted and traveled enough in out-of-the way places to acquire a large share of the Indian's ability to find his way about and even in the intense darkness he had no difficulty in reaching the crest of the hills, turning eastward at the right moment to find the open space outside the natural rock wall enclosing the village of Snorri Gellison, and from there to reach the rise of ground directly back of the beach.

As he had expected, he saw a big fire at the place where he had discovered Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird earlier in the day, and at once he began to make his way cautiously toward it. When he was as near as he dared to go he lifted his head above a boulder and looked down to see Georgia sitting on a rock near the fire, while the mate sat across from her. Lying upon the ground or sitting upon boulders on the other two sides were the three seamen he had surprised in the afternoon and the four who had been in the boat with Volberg.

For a time Donald was content to lie there and watch. Georgia was unharmed. Volberg evidently was waiting for daylight before taking any action either directly to recapture the ship or, by using Georgia as a hostage, to gain control through threats.

This last brought to Donald a realization of the frame of mind of those on board the *Anywhere*. Neither Mr. Temple nor Dr. Baird would be likely to remain on board all night without making some attempt to learn what had happened both to him and to Georgia. If they left the ship it would mean certain disaster, and that they would leave before morning Donald was convinced when he recalled the expression he had last seen on Dr. Baird's face.

Accordingly, after watching the group around the fire for a few minutes more, Donald quietly withdrew, tugging at Charley's sleeve as a sign that the Indian should follow. Once over the crest of the hills and out of sound of the beach, he was confronted by a new problem. How could he send a message to the ship when Charley could not speak a word of English and there was nothing with which to write or to write upon.

In his perplexity he stated his problem to the Indian, who immediately began to feel about in the darkness. After a moment Donald felt a large, flat stone placed in his hands.

"With a knife," said the Indian simply.

DONALD found that the stone was soft and easily scratched and immediately he began to spell out a message. Several times he was forced to risk striking a match to see that he did not run the lines together, and when he had finished he found the following perfectly legible:

Mate got her. In no danger now. Am on beach watching. Don't worry. I'll get her when forces are divided. Don't play into their hands by leaving ship. Give rifle.

At some length he gave Charley his instructions. He was to go back to the canoe, paddle out to the ship, approach it from the north, deliver the message to one of the white men and then return at once, bringing with him one of the three rifles on board.

Charley repeated the things he was to do and then, when Donald spoke again, there was no answer. The Indian had slipped away in the darkness.

Donald returned to his position behind the boulder. He found some of the men making themselves as comfortable as they could on the ground near the fire. Georgia and Volberg still remained seated. Two sailors were broiling meat by holding it near the flames on sharp sticks.

For an hour Donald did not move. The temperature was barely above freezing and he began to shiver. At last he became so cold he was forced to abandon his vigil and, going back into the hills, find a level spot where he could run back and forth until the blood started to run freely again.

On his return drowsiness began to overpower him. Twice he caught himself dozing. Nothing happened at the fire to keep him awake, and at last he dropped off to sleep, his head on one arm.

The cold wakened him and he lifted his head with a start and looked down at the beach. Volberg was standing beside Georgia. The sound of the mate's voice came to him but he could not distinguish the words. The girl shook her head, then looked up defiantly and spoke. Volberg took a quick step forward and grasped her shoulder, lifting her to her feet. She screamed, and Donald's rifle leaped out past the boulder.

Before he could line up the sights in the dim light of the fire toward which he must shoot, Volberg thrust the girl back upon the rock and walked to the other side of the

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blaze. As he seated himself Donald breathed more easily. With good light he would have risked taking a shot at the mate at that distance with perfect confidence. To shoot into a crowd with dim sights was another matter, and the next moment his anxiety vanished when he saw Volberg stretch out beside the fire. The other men followed his example, with the exception of one left on guard, and in a few minutes the whole camp seemed to be asleep.

This was as Donald had wished. With all eight men together, even though they were armed only with four revolvers, the element of chance was too great in a surprise attack. His opportunity, he knew, must come in daylight, when Volberg might divide his forces in an attempt to get into communication with those on the *Anywhere* or to make a bold attack upon the ship. He had hardly settled into a comfortable position when a large, soft object was laid on his back. He started but was kept from rising by a hand on his shoulder. Then a voice whispered in his ear:

"I have done it. Here is a blanket I brought from the ship."

Charley had returned.

Donald instructed the Indian to keep a constant watch and inform him if anything unusual occurred. Then he wrapped the blanket about himself and in a moment was asleep.

It was broad daylight when at last he was wakened by a gentle shake.

"They are getting ready to go," whispered Charley.

Donald threw off the blanket and crept up behind the boulder. The entire party on the beach were on their feet, even Georgia. There was a command from Volberg and then, the girl in the middle of the group and each of the men carrying a piece of the meat Donald's Indians had brought the day before, they started westward along the beach.

As on the afternoon previous, the fog lay thickly over the sea and great clouds of it were carried in over the land by the north wind. The sailors had not gone more than half the length of the beach before Donald felt that he could follow with perfect safety.

He and Charley kept to the high ground and sought as much cover as possible. Several times they lost sight of the party they were following. At the end of the beach they saw Volberg lead the way upward and, once on the rise, turn toward the rock wall which hid the village.

"He's moving camp inside the enclosure," thought Donald as he began a circle which would bring him out upon a hill just opposite the entrance. He reached it in time to see the last of the seamen disappear in the cut that led through to the village enclosure.

In accordance with the plan he had made in the night, Donald prepared to wait until Volberg made the next move. There was every reason to believe that the mate would divide his party. Then the time to strike would come.

But at the end of half an hour no such action had been taken. Occasionally the wind carried the fog away or lifted it higher in great clouds and Donald had a glimpse of the interior of the enclosure. Twice he caught sight of Georgia sitting on a pile of stones which probably had formed the foundation of a Norseman's dwelling. About her the men were busy cooking breakfast and gathering whatever moss they could find that was dry enough to burn.

Still confident that Volberg must soon make some move, Donald waited. Again the fog lifted, and he saw the entire party in one of the rectangular spaces which had once been a house. The men sat on the low walls or lay on the ground, smoking or sleeping. Volberg was wandering about idly examining the ruins. Georgia still sat on the pile of stone where Donald had first seen her.

Suddenly it occurred to the young man that Volberg, too, might be playing a waiting game. He was supplied with enough meat to last a week, and he could remain where he was until those on the ship, driven frantic by the absence of Georgia, would send some one to make terms or leave the ship unguarded.

That this was exactly what Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird would do, if noon came and there was no word from shore, struck Donald when he had deducted Volberg's plan. And the mate could ask nothing better than to have the watchers desert the ship.

Donald stood up and looked over the land. There was no approach to the village site from the north or west. The steep cliffs shut off access from the east. There remained only the opening in the rock wall on the south. Through that alone could he reach Georgia. As he stood there, searching through the fog shadows, Charley suddenly gripped his arm.

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"The Eskimos," he whispered.

"Eskimos," repeated Donald as he whirled.

"There," Charley pointed and then turned as if to run.

"Wait!" commanded Donald as he grasped the Indian's arm. "They are not going to hurt you if they are there. I haven't seen anything."

"Right that way," insisted the trembling Indian as he pointed into the fog that had whirled in thickly over the land to the south.

The opaque cloud shut off everything at a distance of one hundred yards and then suddenly it swirled upward and away, rising as a curtain on a stage and revealing a long line of men approaching.

"Eskimo nothing!" exlaimed Donald in English. Then he added in Chippewayan—"They're the White Indians."

Charley looked and then calmly nodded his assent.

"They're the same ones I see last night back at the little river," he said. "I thought they were Eskimos."

"Of course," declared Donald. "They came across country from the river where we found them. But what are they doing here?"

"Every year they come to a place along the sea," answered Charley. "They tell me. They come every Summer for hundreds of years and some day——"

"I remember now!" cried Donald excitedly. "That's the legend the old Hudson's Bay Company explorer wrote about. Of course. They're making a pilgrimage to the site of the village where their ancestors lived and—by George!"

Donald ceased speaking and started on a run down the hill toward the advancing file of men. He was seen almost instantly and the line halted, several fitting arrows to their bows and the others gripping their spears. Donald threw up one hand as a sign that he meant no harm. As he advanced out of the fog he was recognized and a low hum ran down the line.

WHEN HE reached the first Indian he held out his hand. The man, big, square-shouldered, with blue eyes, brown hair and a straggling beard that might have been called yellow, gripped it solemnly.

In his first encounter with this strange tribe Donald, the only white man any of them had ever seen, had had some difficulty in establishing amicable relations. But they spoke a Chippewayan dialect which Charley and Eltsi could understand fairly well, and with his two Indians acting as interpreters, and occasionally using a word himself, the young man had finally succeeded in placing himself on a thoroughly friendly footing.

This morning, however, there was a certain amount of reserve in the attitude of the leader, while the other members of the party, instead of crowding around the two, remained in line.

"Tell them, Charley," Donald said, "that I have been their friend and that I wish to continue to be their friend and that to show it I will leave a rifle and other presents when I leave for my country. Tell them that I am in great trouble, that some of my own people are thieves and have attacked me and that they're holding one of the women from my country prisoner on the other side of the rock wall. Make the men understand that if they help me to fight those sailors I'll make them many presents."

Charley spoke at some length and the big leader listened attentively. But at the end he shook his head and spoke a few words.

"He says his people would not care to fight a battle for others," the Indian interpreted.

"But tell him I will give him a rifle and many presents," repeated Donald. "Tell him anything, Charley. We must have their help."

Again Charley spoke to the leader. He went on and on and at last the big Indian's interest seemed to be aroused. Donald, remembering the ship and its undoubted store of provisions and many other things that would appeal to the Indians, broke in with permission for Charley to promise anything he wished.

But Charley evidently had ideas of his own and he chattered on, gesticulating vigorously. The leader, after listening intently for a moment, suddenly became greatly excited. He spoke to the men behind him and they crowded around Charley and Donald in a compact group. As soon as they had caught a few words they began to jabber hysterically.

Donald, amazed by this quick change, tried in vain to catch some of the words. Then Charley stopped speaking and instantly the entire group moved forward.

"What do they say, Charley?" demanded Donald.

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"See. They are going to fight the white men."

Donald sprang ahead to join the chief, who had started toward the rock wall with a long, loping stride. It was his intention to stop outside and plan an attack, but the Indian, once he had made up his mind, took matters into his own hands. Nothing Donald could do served to stop him. Straight toward the opening in the rocks he went and, Donald at his side, started through.

Not until they were inside did he stop. There he halted until the last of his twenty-five or thirty men were grouped about him. Then, at a nod, they spread out and started straight across toward the side of the village and Volberg and his crew.

For a time the fog hid everything. Donald, out at the end of the line, peered forward to learn the sailors' actions in the face of this strange and unexpected attack. That it was an attack there could be no doubt. The Indians, who had never seen or traded with white men, were armed with primitive weapons. But they were all held in readiness. Bows half-bent, spears held slightly back, Volberg could not mistake the meaning of it.

Then the fog thinned and the sailors seemed to rise out of the ground ahead. There were a few sharp yelps from the Indians, a scramble of the seamen into a group, a sharp command from Volberg, and then—flight.

The spectacle of skin-clad, spear-armed savages springing out of the fog had been too much for the seamen. Outnumbered, only half of them with weapons, there was nothing else for them but to run.

Only, there was no place to which they could flee. The invaders came from the only opening to the enclosure. They were cut off on the other sides by steep walls of rock and by the inlet itself. The flight ended and they gathered into a compact group inside one of the higher walled ruins, ready for battle.

Georgia had been forgotten in the quick retreat of the seamen. At her first glimpse of the Indians she, too, began to run. Donald, seeing her start, called out in quick protest:

"Georgia! Georgia! Don't! This way!"

She stopped, looked about in wonder and then saw Donald. Instantly she started toward him, but not until the first of the Indians had reached the enclosure in which the seamen were cornered.

Volberg and three of the others fired point-blank at the savages. One Indian fell, but the others began to leap over the wall. It was too much for the sailors. The leveled spears sapped what courage their desperate position had given them and they scrambled over the rear wall and scattered in every direction, seeking as best they could to dodge past the Indians and get out of the enclosure.

Georgia, in the meantime, had reached Donald.

"These are the White Indians and you're all right with them," he assured her. "They've helped me get you from Volberg. Don't be afraid. Stick with them."

He darted off instantly, for Volberg, running faster than the others, had cleared the end of the Indian line and was headed straight for the opening.

"Halt!" cried Donald, throwing up his rifle.

The mate did not turn his head, nor did a bullet in front of him alter his course. He had a straight, unobstructed path to the cleft in the wall and he clearly intended to stake everything on his ability to reach it first. Donald, sensing this, dropped to one knee.

"I'll get you, Volberg!" he shouted.

The mate did not even turn. The fog eddied in and only the dim shadow of the fleeing man could be seen. Aiming at his legs, Donald pulled the trigger. With the shot the fog closed in completely.

Confident that the Indians could handle the other seamen and feeling the importance of the mate's capture, Donald ran on toward the opening in the wall. He gained sufficiently to catch a glimpse of Volberg as he disappeared through the passage and again when he had reached the outside. He had turned toward the beach and the boat.

Donald settled to the long sprint, certain that he could catch the mate before he could get the boat off. But his rifle prevented his best speed and on the beach the fog was so thick he could not see more than fifty yards in advance. He reached the boat but there was no sign of Volberg. He went on to the end and then returned, searching for tracks or a glimpse of the man. But the fog had swallowed him completely.

"Anyhow, she's free," he gasped as, exhausted by his long run, he started slowly

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toward the village. He climbed the hill and walked across to the opening in the wall. As he entered he wondered if the Indians had left any of the seamen alive and for the first time doubted the wisdom of having enlisted their aid. Without a crew the *Anywhere* could not be sailed home. The thought spurred him on and he started to run. But at the entrance he was halted by Charley coming out.

"Where's the woman?" was his first question, and then, before Charley could answer, he went on: "Did they kill all the white men? Are they inside yet? I'm going back to see."

"The Indians all gone," answered Charley.

"Gone! The seamen didn't drive them off?"

"The white men in there running around like rabbits yet. The Indians kill one. Another get an arrow in the arm. That's all."

"But Miss Temple, the woman! Where is she?"

"The Indians take her."

"Take her! Where?"

"Over there," and Charley waved toward the south.

Donald was too confused by these reports to ask further questions and Charley took it upon himself to explain.

"They just drive off the white men," he said. "Then they see the woman and they quit fighting. They get around her in a ring and they all walk out through the cut here and over the hills. They are gone."

"Yes, I know," said Donald impatiently, "but how far. They must be near."

"You never see them or the woman again," said Charley. "Those Indians wait hundreds of years for her to come and now she take them away in big canoes and they never come back."

CHAPTER XI

THE WHITE INDIANS' DREAM COMES TRUE

DONALD'S inclination was to disbelieve. The idea was too preposterous. Then, too, he had traveled many hundreds of miles with Charley and knew the Indian's superstitions. But the bare possibility of such an event increased his desire to find Georgia at once. If such a thing might be true, he must find the white Indians immediately to convince them of their mistake.

Calling Charley to follow, he started quickly up the valley by which the Indians had approached. In a few minutes he reached the spot where he had first met them. There he confidently expected he would find the band awaiting his coming. He looked around eagerly. Several times he called, for he knew that Georgia, at least, would answer. But there was no sound, no sign of any one having passed.

Only the fog, which had begun to thin rapidly, gave him hope. The wind was blowing it forward in waves. It had hidden the Indians before. It might reveal them now.

He started desperately on a run. His way led naturally up the depression between the ridges, for he did not believe that any one would leave it for the almost impassable boulder-strewn slopes. He knew, too, that this was in the direction of the place on the little creek where Charley had first been alarmed by the Indians' approach the evening before.

But at the end of an hour, when no sign of the band had been had, Donald stopped. At his rate of travel, and at the rate he knew Georgia could get over the rough going, he had been on the way more than long enough to overtake her. He glanced at the country about him. Tracking was impossible. There was no need even to look for a trace of where thirty moccasin-shod savages had been.

The land was as bare and as desolate as could be found anywhere in the world. Low hills of rocks, boulder-strewn depressions between, that was all. No soil, no vegetation, except here and there patches of moss that served only to color the rocks to which it clung. Not a bush to be broken by hurrying feet, not a leaf to be overturned, not a blade of grass to be bent, not a square inch of sand or mud to receive an impression. It would be as easy to track a stocking-footed child across a ballroom floor.

The idea that Georgia was being hurried away, that every minute was carrying her farther from him, drove Donald almost to madness. He wanted to ask Charley more, to find out what evidence he had for such an unbelievable statement. But he knew the time that would be required for such a questioning and the bare idea that his theory might not be true drove Donald to action. Something had to be done quickly.

The fog, now greatly thinned, gave him

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an idea. After directing Charley to climb the hill to his left, he took the one on the right in the hope of sighting the band.

The hill Donald climbed was the higher and from it he had a command of a stretch of country to the north and south. Systematically he began to search every bit of ground. He looked steadily, following out valleys, watching the sides of hills, pausing only when he saw a place that might afford cover for so large a party.

The north wind had been increasing steadily and was sweeping the fog before it. But not a glimpse of a moving object rewarded him. It was then that Donald for the first time completely lost confidence and he began to consider Charley's theory seriously. He was about to call to the Indian when Charley spoke behind him.

"They are gone," he said in Chippewayan.

"I know that," was the sharp retort, "but we've got to find them."

"You never find the woman again."

"But we've got to find her!"

"She not from your country like you tell us."

"Why do you say that?"

"She comes from a country far north in the sea where the men who make those stone houses come from. Only she is not like a man but is a spirit."

"Who told you this story?"

"I understand some of it when we live near their village all that time. I talk with them a lot and they tell me about coming every Summer to the stone houses, and why they come."

Donald did not speak. He had used Eltsi as an interpreter exclusively, and several times he had tried to learn if such a pilgrimage were made.

"Those Indians know she come some day," Charley went on. "They know it for hundreds and hundreds of years. She would come, they said, and they would build big canoes, and the woman with the yellow hair would sit on the front of the biggest one and they would sail across the big sea for many days and come to a country where the Eskimos have big villages and much food. The woman would give them spirit-arrows and they would capture the Eskimos and make slaves of them, and then they and their children would live in the villages and the Eskimos would hunt for them, and they would only sit in their houses and eat. Now the woman has come and she has led them away."

"That's just a fairy tale, told around Indian camp-fires."

"It is what the Indians say."

"But I asked Eltsi to find out if they went to the stone houses every Summer and he said they wouldn't tell."

"They wouldn't tell you."

"But Miss Temple wouldn't do a thing like that."

"Listen," said Charley. "You know when we find the Indians this morning. You ask them to help you fight the white men. They won't do it, even when you offer them guns and many presents."

"Yes, but they did help me."

"I know, but not until I tell them the woman you speak of is tall and white and has yellow hair and that she sits in the stone village. Then they go at once and as soon as they get her away from those white men they take her off."

Donald, remembering the sudden change in the attitude of the Indians when Charley was speaking to them, realizing that ensuing events bore out his statements, seeing in Georgia's fair skin and hair a resemblance to the Norse type, and remembering his own Indians' fear of her, could not but accept the story, fantastical as it was.

And with its acceptance, despondency, exhaustion, self-accusation and hopelessness rushed in to accomplish his utter defeat. He had slept only a few hours in two nights and two and a half days. He had been on the go constantly in nearly all that time, paddling, traveling over the rough, rocky country, and he had been exposed to the wet and cold, usually with an empty stomach.

He had, too, taken upon himself the direction of the entire affair. He had promised Mr. Temple that his daughter would be rescued. He had insisted that they remain on board and leave her safety to him. Now he must return to the ship, if he could reach it, and report his complete failure.

But more than anything else, Donald was oppressed by the fate of Georgia. In the wild rush of events since he had first seen her on the beach at his camp there had been no time for him to analyze or to realize his own feelings. When she had been in the hands of the mutinous sailors he had had every confidence that he could rescue her and that he would. Now that she had disappeared somewhere in the wild,

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barren land which surrounded him, that she was in the power of an unknown, savage, tradition-swayed band of Indians, he comprehended his own loss, realized that it was the girl of the camp-fires far to the south who had come to him in the flesh.

FOR a moment this mingling love and fear served to bring fresh determination, an instant renewal of the search. But out in the open, under the sky, Donald Whitney was first of all sportsman and bushman. He had met many situations and had developed that level-headed temperament essential to success in the solution of wilderness problems. His better sense told him that he must return to the ship before further steps were taken.

He started at once, Charley following. In an hour he was back near the coast and could pick out landmarks which would lead him to the west side of the point and the place where his canoe was hidden.

He had no fear of Volberg or his men. In his sullen mood he would have welcomed an encounter. As he skirted the open space just outside the rock wall enclosing the village he watched only to see that no boulder or depression screened a seaman with a revolver. When one man did appear on a slight rise and stand looking at him, Donald gave him only a passing glance and strode on.

"Ahoy, there!" came a voice, and Donald turned to see the seaman wave and start toward him.

He paused and waited, his rifle in the crook of his left arm.

"Are you going to the ship, sir?" the seaman asked when he stopped in front of Donald.

"Why?"

"I want to go with you."

"I imagine your whole outfit would like to do the same thing."

"It's not my outfit, sir," the seaman protested. "I'm with them only to save my own hide, and I've waited for a chance to help out the owners, sir."

Donald recognized the man as one of the three who had been guarding Mr. Temple and Dr. Baird when he rescued them.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Garst, sir, Ed Garst."

"I remember. You're the man who helped Miss Temple get away from the ship that night."

"Yes, sir. Where is she now? Safe, I hope."

"Safe so far as Volberg is concerned. Come along."

Donald saw in the seaman's action a possible plot of the mate, as the man had not made himself known the afternoon before. But from what Dr. Baird and Georgia had said, he might be trusted, and his addition to the Temple forces would be welcomed.

Donald went on toward the shore, but not until he had told Charley in Chippewayan to stay in the rear and have his rifle ready.

"Where's the mate and the rest of his men?" he asked over his shoulder.

"After those Indians scattered them around the ruins there they got together on the beach and put off in the boat, sir. I kept hidden over here, hoping to find you."

"They didn't try to get out to the ship?" asked Donald quickly.

"No, I think they went west, sir."

They reached the shore and Charley carried the canoe down from its hiding-place while Donald stood guard with his rifle, not taking a chance on the loyalty of Garst until they had reached the ship at least.

"You are not going out in that, sir!" exclaimed the sailor in amazement when he saw the canoe set down on the beach.

"It's the only thing we have," answered Donald, not catching the man's meaning.

"But that sea, sir! It's straight on shore. We'll be drowned."

Donald glanced out over the water. The north wind, crossing the ebbing tide, did make a nasty commotion.

"Come on," he commanded. "Get in the middle there and sit down."

"We'll drown!" protested Garst. "That eggshell. She'll swamp sure, sir!"

"All right. Stay ashore."

"That's worse than drowning," answered Garst as he stepped forward, "but I wish it was a yawl, sir. Then I'd take my chance with any of them."

Donald and Charley had difficulty in holding the canoe while the sailor got in. He tried to walk into the center and was almost thrown out. Then he got down on to his hands and knees and crawled, turning a white face to Donald when at last he was seated in the designated place.

Donald immediately shoved off. The canoe shipped one comber but quick thrusts against the bottom with the paddles carried

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it past the breakers before another wave could catch it.

The sea was worse than Donald had imagined. The canoe had been launched behind the shelter of a small point. Only a few strokes were necessary to carry it past this, and then the full force of the seas struck them. The wind tore the tops off the waves and sprayed them over the canoe. It was biting cold, and before they reached the end of the point it began to snow.

Donald and Charley had traveled nearly a thousand miles together in that same small craft, had crossed big Northern lakes and run swift Northern rivers, and they worked together as if one mind directed the muscular contractions of each body. Shooting forward when possible, balancing on the crests of the rollers, gripping the canoe with their knees so that it became part of them they went on and on through the turmoil caused by the contrary forces of wind and tide. The water snarled and twisted, the current pulled the canoe in one direction, the storm thrust at it in another, and yet they continued to rise and fall buoyantly until, once clear of the point, they turned toward the *Anywhere*, barely visible in the snow ahead.

"Now she will go over, sir!" cried Garst in terror as Donald swung the little craft into the trough of the waves.

The sailor involuntarily placed his hands on the gunwales as if to rise and instantly Donald's paddle came down on his head.

"Keep quiet!" shouted Donald, who had not missed a stroke.

The tide was now with them, the wind on the beam, and they rushed down upon the *Anywhere* in long, swirling leaps from crest to trough. The canoe seemed to spring in anticipation of each rising billow before it. It climbed quickly to the top, hung suspended for an instant and then shot down. Donald, with quick twists of his paddle, brought up the bow at the only possible instant or let it fall off ever so slightly to deaden the effect of a curling crest. With a slight swaying of his body he kept the gunwales always safely above the sloping surfaces. The canoe, on what seemed its most dangerous course, rushed on toward the ship, dry and sprayless.

As they came within hailing distance Donald watched the rail of the *Anywhere* for a sign of some member of the Temple party. He even hailed, but no one was to be seen.

"Volberg could come out here and get them and they'd never even know it," he muttered angrily. "Afraid to stay on deck in this storm."

He paddled viciously and when Garst caught the Jacob's ladder that hung from the stern he gruffly ordered the seaman aboard. He was tired, irritable, exasperated with the others who, while he was working on shore, would not even maintain an adequate guard over the ship. When he reached the deck he ran down to the main cabin, but it was empty. He searched the staterooms, excusing himself hurriedly when he wakened Captain Hewitt, and then went on deck again.

"Find any one on board?" he shouted to Garst.

"Two of the crew chained to their bunks in the forecastle is all. The other boat is gone, sir."

"Then they deserted the ship, left it open for Volberg!" cried Donald angrily.

"I wouldn't say that, sir," answered the seaman. "Perhaps they were worried about Miss Temple and went to shore to see if they could find her."

FOR the first time Donald realized that it was mid-afternoon and that those on board had received no word from him since the message on the stone the night before. They undoubtedly had heard the shots fired by himself and the sailors in the battle at the village, may even have had a glimpse of what was going on.

Donald's indignation turned at once to admiration as he pictured the three men, unaccustomed to the sea, their hands tender, ignorant of how to swing an oar, yet launching a boat in that wind and trying to make shore to help in the rescue of Georgia.

"You didn't see them while you were wandering around looking for me, did you?" he asked Garst.

"I didn't go near the beach after Volberg left. But what's that on the beach now?"

Donald wheeled shoreward. The snow had thinned a little and he saw several figures moving about.

"It must be Volberg and some of his men," continued Garst. "I can make out four of them."

"No, that's the people from the ship," corrected Donald. "My Indian was with

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them here and, of course, went with them."

"You're right, sir. Look! They've tried to launch the boat and the surf turned it over.

"They'll never be able to make it!" cried Donald.

Charley spoke in Chippewayan and pointed westward. Donald turned to see a boat rising and falling with the waves a mile down the shore and evidently coming toward them.

"There's Volberg and his outfit!" he exclaimed. "Quick, Garst! Get back into that canoe. We'll leave Charley on board to keep the crew off and you and I'll go ashore and help them out. You understand handling one of those boats in the surf."

The seaman hesitated just an instant and then turned toward stern.

"Aye, aye, sir," he said. "An hour ago I wouldn't have got into one of those things in a duck pond for anybody. But now if you say the word, sir, I'm with you. Any man who can take an eggshell through that sort of a cross-sea is good enough for me to take orders from."

Donald spoke to Charley in Chippewayan, explaining what was to be done.

"But I haven't any gun," the Indian protested.

"That's right. They took the three rifles ashore with them!" exclaimed Donald. "I'll see if they left a revolver in the cabin."

He returned in a moment with two automatics he had found in David's berth, handed them to the Indian with a brief word of advice and then climbed down the ladder to the canoe, where Garst had proceeded him.

"Shall I take an oar, sir?" asked the seaman as he balanced himself uncertainly in the center.

"No," answered Donald. "I can handle her straight before the wind. Sit down ahead of that thwart and you'll help most."

The snow had begun to fall more thickly and when they started they could not see the shore. Donald turned the canoe down the wind and as they rushed away from the *Anywhere* the water swirled and boiled beneath the bow, the waves carrying them in great leaps.

The shore in sight, Donald turned just enough to land near the overturned boat on the beach. He saw the Temple party watching him and then, in a smother of foam and flying spray, the canoe was carried up on to the beach by a big wave and left high and dry. Before either Garst or Donald could scramble out, however, the next wave had caught them and threw the light craft almost at the feet of Mr. Temple.

"Georgia's safe aboard, isn't she?" cried the father anxiously.

"No," confessed Donald hesitatingly, "she is not. She is with the white Indians back in the country somewhere."

"With the white Indians?" repeated David.

"They took her for some sort of a goddess, one they've been expecting for a thousand years, and carried her off. I followed but couldn't find them."

"Georgia! Off there in that country with a band of savages!"

Mr. Temple spoke fiercely and stepped in front of Donald.

"Good heavens!" cried the young man. "I didn't expect such a thing. The Indians helped me drive off Volberg and his men and then in the fog made off with her. But we'll get her back. We've got to, somehow."

"Of course," said David, who, white-faced, had been listening intently. "We've got to get her back!"

"Let's start now!" interrupted Rollin. "What are we waiting for?"

"We've got to get back to the ship first or Volberg will have it in fifteen minutes," said Donald, recovering somewhat from his contrition and resenting the implication in Mr. Temple's tone and bearing.

"—— the ship!" exploded Mr. Temple. "It's Georgia we care about. Which way did they go?"

Donald alone seemed to see the situation as a whole, and he also recognized the futility of arguing.

"Look here!" he exclaimed angrily. "I want Miss Temple back as much as you. I assumed responsibility for her rescue and it's up to me to see that she is rescued. But I've had time to see this thing as a whole and you haven't. The first thing for us to do is to put this boat into the water and get aboard the ship. Volberg and his men will be in sight any second."

"Let him have the ship!" retorted Mr. Temple frantically. "We want Georgia!"

"And how will you get her when we have no food, no supplies of any kind? I've been back five miles from the coast and had

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to return. It isn't work for a few hours to find a band of Indians in a wilderness bigger than a State."

He turned to David and Rollin as if seeking support in his contention, as if expecting rational comprehension from them.

"Mr. Whitney is right," declared David, who alone had caught the appeal. "Let's get back to the ship first."

"There they are!" interrupted Garst, and the others turned to see a boat just rounding the point a mile to the west. As they looked another snow squall dropped between them.

The seaman had started at once for the boat. Donald followed. As he grasped one gunwale he felt a shoulder against his and turned to see David Baird bending beside him.

"Fine!" Donald cried. "Catch a hold, the rest of you! Over with it!"

The boat was turned over by the combined efforts of the entire party. Donald and Garst picked up the oars and threw them in.

"All together!" cried the seaman, and the bow was turned and shoved out.

"In with you, sir," he commanded when a wave receded, and he indicated Mr. Temple, David and Rollin with nods of his head.

"That's it. Get your oars out. You and the Indian be ready, lad, and away with her on the next wave."

THEY shoved together, caught the retreating wave and jumped in, just as the next wave reached them. David and Rollin struggled, but clumsily, and the boat would have been turned around and upset had not Garst wrenched an oar from Mr. Temple's hands and held the bow off.

Donald and Eltsi, though they were strange to such large boats, were natural watermen, and before the third wave had rushed in upon them they had gained some headway and the bow rose and fell harmlessly.

"Now, all together there!" shouted Garst as he ran to the stern, ready to steer. "Pull away!"

Oars clashed together, a wave sloshed in over one side, but Donald and Eltsi worked in sufficient unison to sustain the headway and they were soon out in less turbulent water.

"Lay to it!" cried Garst. "Volberg's seen us and he's trying to head us off. We're straight against the wind, and he's the best of us in every way. Lay to it!"

They pulled better now and made more headway. Mr. Temple, David and Rollin strained as hard as Donald and the Indian, though with far less effect.

"How about it?" gasped Donald after five minutes of terrific toil.

"They're gaining," was the curt answer. "Pull away!"

After another five minutes Donald turned to see for himself.

"They'll beat us!" he cried. "Wait!"

He pulled his oar inboard and reached for his rifle.

"You can't hit anything with this sea on" protested Garst.

Donald did not reply. He balanced himself for a moment, caught the sway of the boat, and then the Springfield barked.

"Just ahead of them!" called Garst.

Donald fired again and the seaman announced that he had struck in the same place.

"I know it," reported Donald irritably. "I'll try one more there and then let them have it."

He fired the third time and then sounds of a fusillade came from ahead. "That's Charley, with his two automatics!" laughed Donald in his relief. "Hear him sputter. Start rowing, the rest of you, and I'll keep watch. There! They're turning."

Volberg's boat had swung into the wind and his men were resting on their oars.

"They don't want any more of your shooting," said Garst admiringly. "There they go. They're rowing the other way."

In fifteen minutes they were aboard the *Anywhere*, but before they reached it the wind was blowing a gale and the snow was so thick they could not see Volberg's boat when it landed in the surf on the beach.

"The first thing we had better do is to get into the cabin, where it is warm," advised David. "Every one of us is soaked."

He led the way and the others, except Garst, followed. When a fire had been started and they had removed their wet clothing, Donald told, as briefly as he could, of the events on shore since he had left the *Anywhere* the night before. He was confused, hesitant, plainly showed his shame and self-condemnation.

"Good Lord, Mr. Temple," he finished, "I had no idea it would turn out that way.

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It seemed a providential thing, those Indians appearing when they did, and naturally I took what help I could get."

David, more than the others, saw the young fellow's distress and he reached across and placed a hand on Donald's shoulder.

"Forget about that, Whitney," he said. "You dropped out of the sky and came to our rescue without thinking of consequences to yourself. You have done more than any of us could do, you've saved both Georgia and us from Volberg, regained control of the ship, and even now our case is not hopeless."

"Of course," agreed Mr. Temple, "and I'm mighty sorry for what I said on shore. We owe everything to you, Whitney, and we don't blame you in the least. Only, boy," and the father leaned anxiously forward, a hand outstretched, "we can get her back, can't we?"

"It's a mighty big country to the south and west there," Donald answered. "No one knows where this tribe hunts. White men have never seen them. And the season is late."

"We'll find her," said David quietly. "We've got to find her. Anything else is unthinkable."

"Of course," said Donald. "I'm going to start at once, as soon as I can get something to eat."

"You'll do nothing of the sort," said David sharply. "You're near exhaustion now, man. And, besides, hear that storm! You couldn't get ashore."

"But we can't spare time for anything now," protested Donald. "The sooner we get after those Indians the better."

"The delay of an hour won't lessen the chances of finding her, perhaps not a day."

"You don't mean that we should sit here while she is out there with those savages?" cried Mr. Temple, angrily.

"I mean this," answered David quietly. "The big thing is to find Georgia, to bring her back. It is such a big thing that we must not plunge into it heedlessly, without a plan. And, even if we do find her, we must still remember that the problem is only half-solved, that the question of Volberg and the crew, of getting the ship out of here before Winter comes, is of some importance."

"Nothing counts except Georgia!" retorted Mr. Temple.

"Nothing else, of course, but it is too big a thing to be done in an instant. We must plan something, and we must give Whitney a chance to rest."

"We don't need rest," protested the father.

"And what would we do ashore?" answered David a little impatiently. "Mr. Temple, we've got to go at this thing coolly. You couldn't travel half as far in a day on shore as those Indians. You would be lost in an hour. I wouldn't be any better, nor Rollin. This search requires a man with Whitney's experience, and Whitney must be in shape. Further, how can one or two or even all of us attack a large band of Indians single-handed? There is not only the question of finding Georgia but there is the problem of getting her safely away."

"David is right, father," broke in Rollin. "We would do anything, take any chances, to get Georgia back. But we want a sure-fire plan before we start. And we must make some arrangements to keep control of the ship and to hold off Volberg and his crew. Do you think, Mr. Whitney, that she is in any immediate danger?"

"NO," answered Donald, "I don't. If these Indians think she is some sort of a spirit they won't harm her. It is simply a question of finding the band before they return to their Winter hunting-grounds to the south and of getting her out of their hands. Further, as Dr. Baird said, we must not forget that we must hang on to the ship."

"What do you mean, that the Indians think she is some sort of a spirit?" asked Mr. Temple.

"As I explained," answered Donald, "Charley had heard of this legend that a woman with yellow hair was to come and lead them away to a place where they would have nothing to do except eat. They have been coming to the site of the Norse village every Summer for hundreds of years, they say, to find her, and what would be more natural than that they should think Miss Temple is this spirit woman when they find her there."

"The saga of Snorri Gellison!" exclaimed David. "Remember the one Georgia dug up in Chicago? We have it here."

He took a book from one of the cases and turned the leaves.

"This is it," he said, and he began to read a portion of the Norse legend.

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"That's it!" broke in Donald. "I can see the whole thing. Snorri built this village and his people, or their descendants, mingled with this band of Indians and gradually became savages, like the remnants of the Norsemen in Greenland. The legend persisted, twisted by the Indian viewpoint. That accounts for the capture of the Eskimos and making them slaves. And we need not worry about Miss Temple's safety for the present."

"What plan would you suggest in going after her?" asked Mr. Temple.

"First, we'll have to find them. I don't think that will be so difficult as it seems. I spent two weeks with the band on a river flowing into the south side of Baker Lake. They came down that river from the south and stopped above its mouth, as they do not like to come too close to the Eskimo country. The Eskimos travel through this inlet and Baker Lake every Summer.

"This fear of the Eskimos accounts for the men of the tribe only coming to the village here. Instead of using their canoes and traveling down Baker Lake and out into the inlet, they come across country. The women and children are undoubtedly still in camp on that river, and the men will return there with Miss Temple. By taking the water route we can perhaps reach there first. If not, we can go on up the river until we find them."

Donald spoke with rising eagerness, and his courage and confidence returned.

"It's not so bad!" he ended. "We can do it. We can catch them on the river."

"How many of us should go?" asked Mr. Temple.

"I don't know," answered Donald. "I want my Indians with me at least."

"We had better decide what is to be done at this end and see how many we can spare," suggested David. "We must hang on to the ship."

"Can't we get into communication with Volberg and make terms," suggested Mr. Temple. "I'd be willing to make any sort of a concession to get Georgia back."

"It is not a question of concession," said David. "It's a question of whether we can trust these men. Personally, I wouldn't trust Volberg with anything. It may be different with the crew."

"Why not call in this man Garst and find out how the crew feel, now that they've lost out completely," suggested Rollin.

"Do that," said his father.

Rollin summoned Garst, who reported that the men would be more than willing to return to the ship.

"How about Volberg?" asked Mr. Temple.

"I wouldn't trust him, sir. He started all this."

"He did! He led us to believe to the last that it was the crew that caused all the trouble."

"That was part of the game, sir."

"Then Volberg was at the bottom of the mutiny from the first?" asked David.

"He was, sir."

"But where did he get hold of this preposterous story about buried treasure? It was an impossible fairy tale, and I can't understand a man of Volberg's intelligence believing it."

Garst did not reply but stood fingering his cap and looking at the floor.

"Didn't he tell you men where he learned about this supposed treasure?" asked Mr. Temple.

"Yes, he did, sir."

"Where was it, then?"

"I don't like to be a tale-bearer, sir, or put any of our party in bad."

"Our party!" exclaimed Mr. Temple and David together.

"Yes, sir."

The men around the table stared at each other in bewilderment.

"That's impossible!" exclaimed David at last. "When did Volberg get hold of this story? After we sailed?"

"Before he ever came aboard, sir."

Mr. Temple and David turned instantly and looked at Rollin. The young man, his face white and drawn but his eyes staring in bewilderment, was looking at Garst.

"Out with it," he whispered.

"Well, sir," began the sailor, addressing Rollin, "it was you that did it. When you met him that morning you had been drinking, Volberg said, and you told him that, while it was pretended that you people were looking for some Indians and some ruins, it was the Spanish treasure you were really after. You told him the whole story, about the ship being chased up the Atlantic coast and the old map and the secret map and all the rest, sir.

"Volberg believed it because he figured you was talking too much when drinking, and when he told the men how he learned

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it they were sure it was right. I believed it, you made it so strong, and when they demanded their share and Mr. Temple told them there wasn't any treasure, they thought, of course, you were fooling them. It made them more certain than ever, and it made them mad."

"But Volberg wasn't in with the crew at first," declared Mr. Temple. "He merely reported what the men said."

"That was part of their game, sir. They had it all fixed beforehand, before they ever came on board the ship in Boston."

CHAPTER XII

THE SECOND MUTINY

IF ALL eyes were upon Rollin there was no reproach, no condemnation, no loathing, in them. When the young man glanced up at the others they were the first to look away.

Each one knew what had caused all the trouble of the last few days, what had brought about the situation which threatened not only their lives but promised an unthinkable fate for Georgia. Each knew that Rollin's drunken story had brought about a situation in which his sister was threatened with a fate more terrible even than the loss of her life.

To David especially this propensity of the young man to romance when intoxicated was well known. Because of his clear eyes, ready tongue and vivid imagination, he could tell impossible tales in so convincing a manner that even his friends were sometimes deceived.

But neither David nor Mr. Temple, despite the peril in which Georgia had been placed or their fear for her, had any other emotion than compassion. They could not and look at the distorted face of the young man as he sat staring blankly at the after bulkhead. Even Donald Whitney, who knew little of Rollin's history, had only pity for him. Garst still stood at the head of the table, fumbling his cap and looking at the floor. No one spoke for a moment and then David broke the silence.

"We ought to be able to get the crew back then, if we can have a talk with them?" he asked of Garst.

"They'd be glad to come, sir," was the answer, "but you want to remember that they mutinied and if they ever get back to a civilized port they are liable to arrest, and you know what that means, sir."

"Do you mean we can't trust them again?" asked David.

"When a man's got a rope around his neck you can't tell what he'll do, sir."

"These men ought never to be prosecuted for mutiny," broke in Mr. Temple. "Technically, perhaps they can, but it hasn't been their fault, and they shouldn't be blamed for it. It's been our fault, mine, and I am willing to take the blame. When they made that first demand I should have convinced them. Instead I made them an offer that aroused their suspicion. They believed this story of Rollin's and felt defrauded."

"That's true, sir," said Garst. "It was just the way it all came out. First, you offered to give them all the treasure and they thought you were just fooling them. And then when you and your son found the village you wouldn't let the men go up to it but sent them back in the boat. So they thought you were just going to keep the treasure hidden and try to fool them with that talk of Norsemen. But they've mutinied and they know it. You might trust the crew, but the only way I'd take Volberg aboard would be in chains."

"Volberg is proved a criminal," added David. "Garst says he planned this in Boston. We need waste no sympathy nor take any blame there. But that can go. It's Georgia we must consider now. The ship will stay here and we can keep the crew off if they try to recapture it. How are we going to rescue Georgia and how many of us are to go? That's the first problem. Those who remain can do what they can to settle the other."

"Whitney and his Indians will go, of course," said Mr. Temple.

Rollin, for the first time since Garst had told his story, seemed to have heard what the others said. He turned quickly to Donald and threw out a hand across the table imploringly.

"Take me!" he cried. "Take me! I'll do anything, anything!"

Donald felt only pity for the young man. He recognized the emotions which prompted the request, but he shook his head.

"No," he said, "I don't think you are in shape, physically, for such an expedition as this must be."

"I don't care what happens to me!" exclaimed Rollin bitterly.

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"Yes, but it isn't that," replied Donald gently. "It will be speed, endurance and a knowledge of the country and conditions that count. Any one who can't meet the requirements would be a hindrance rather than a help."

Rollin sank back into his chair as if he had been struck. Donald, embarrassed by his refusal and by what he had been forced to say, turned to Mr. Temple and David.

"I wish you would give me one more chance!" he exclaimed impulsively.

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Temple.

"This is the way I have been figuring this out. It would be foolish for us to plan to rescue Miss Temple by force. There are not enough of us, even if we have firearms against bows and arrows and spears, to be certain of success against the Indians. Even if we all left the ship and thereby cut every bridge behind us, we would not be certain of success."

"What do you propose?" asked David.

"This. We have to deal with a band of savages who, until they first saw me three weeks ago, had never laid eyes upon white men. They are Indians with a trace of white blood, but as is always the case when Indian blood is mixed, the Indian comes out on top.

"This band particularly is swayed by superstition. They know how to hunt, how to exist through the terrible Winters up here, and that is all. To them anything out of their experience is supernatural. Where they would fight well if attacked openly, they would be terror-stricken if fooled by some simple trick. Your watch would mystify them. My rifle, when they first heard it, sent the whole band scampering. A match gave them the idea I must be possessed of remarkable powers."

"Then you think they could be defeated by a trick?" asked Mr. Temple eagerly.

"But if there is a slip, if you are discovered, it would be the end," interrupted David.

"It would have to be a good one," admitted Donald, "one that was sure-fire."

"Have you anything planned?"

"I have a vague idea," answered Donald, "but first of all I've got to have some sleep."

He pulled out his watch.

"It's two o'clock," he continued. "I'm going to bed. I wish you would let Charley and Eltsi get some rest, too. Call me as soon as the storm has abated in the least, and I'll explain my plan and be off. I want to think it over a little more first."

"Why wait?" demanded Mr. Temple. "If you can't go, the rest of us should do it. I can't sit here idle when Georgia is out there in that desolate country in the hands of those savages and going farther and farther away every minute. I've got to do something."

"I know how you feel, exactly," said David. "Nothing could be worse than idleness for me, and yet common sense dictates that Mr. Whitney get some rest and then begin the work of rescue. It would be sheer folly, and lead to certain disaster, if you or I or Rollin were to attempt anything without him. And I doubt if even Whitney could make the shore in this storm."

DONALD arose and went into the stateroom David indicated. Rollin, at David's suggestion, went on deck and relieved the two Indians, who went to bed in the forecastle. David himself, after talking with Mr. Temple for a few minutes, also went on deck and, with Rollin, began to keep watch for the possible approach of Volberg or any of his men. Garst, because of a little past experience, was set to work in the galley.

After the meal, which was necessarily served in relays, Mr. Temple joined David on deck. The wind was blowing harder than ever and had shifted to the northwest. Snow was driving horizontally and thickly.

"Volberg could be aboard before we knew it," said Mr. Temple after a glance.

"But he couldn't get a boat out against that wind," answered David. "I don't think there is much chance."

"Look here!" exclaimed Mr. Temple after a moment. "What do you think about leaving so much in this young fellow's hands?"

"It's perfectly all right," was the ready answer.

"But he fell down once. It was his mistake that made this possible. If we hadn't left it all to him last night and this morning, some one could have gotten Georgia away from those Indians. Besides, we don't know much about Whitney. How did he get here, anyhow?"

"And what did we do today but make a mess of it," retorted David with a slight

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show of exasperation. "We left the ship unguarded because we didn't get word from Whitney and heard that shooting. And when we got ashore we didn't do anything, and we weren't able to launch the boat and return. If Whitney hadn't come out to get us, when he did the least we could have expected was a mix-up with Volberg and the wounding or possible death of one or more of us.

"Whitney has shown that, single-handed, he is capable of meeting most any situation that arises. He reached Chesterfield Inlet by coming across country from the south, a journey few men on the continent would care to attempt. And his way out is even more difficult, with Winter coming the last of this month, as it does in this country.

"You must remember that without Whitney's providential appearance upon the scene we would still be on shore, Georgia would be in Volberg's hands, and our position would be absolutely hopeless. Whitney has jumped into this with all the energy and ability possible, and he has unselfishly risked everything to help us out. He knows the wilderness, he has been with these Indians, and he is big and strong and capable. He has plenty of nerve and he is resourceful.

"I would do anything possible, and several things bordering upon the impossible, to have Georgia back on this deck with us. But I want it so badly that I am willing to concede the task to a better man when he is anxious to take it."

"But shouldn't one or more of us go with him? It's putting all our hopes on one man's ability."

"If we could be a help to him, yes. But if we would only be a hindrance, I say no. This job requires some one who can withstand hardship and fatigue, some one who can handle a canoe and travel through this rough country in daylight or dark. Either one of us would fail in these things, as we showed today, and simply keep Whitney from making the speed he could make without us."

"But if he fails," objected Mr. Temple, "there is no one to take his place."

"He can't fail. He must not fail, and he knows it. And what could we do that he could not do? Perhaps my counsel sounds cold. But you must know that it is not. Remember, I have watched Georgia and loved Georgia since she was a little girl. Do you suppose it is going to be easy for me to remain in this ship while she is in the hands of those Indians? It is only because I care so much that I can let a far better man go alone, unhampered by my presence."

David robbed his words of their severity by gripping Mr. Temple's arm. That they were the tonic necessary was proven by the older man's answer.

"I know you are right, David. But when I think of where she is I can't even plan wisely."

He turned and walked away. David, knowing what the next few days would mean to him, was torn by pity. His own manner had appeared to be calm, but it was only because he had made it so. He realized that if their plans were to be successful they must be made with cool judgment. And he could remain cool only by making himself forget that somewhere out in that strange country Georgia was needing him and he was powerless to help her.

Rollin, his father and David continued to keep watch in pairs. The afternoon wore on, but so thick had the storm become, darkness arrived without their perceiving it. The wind was even stronger than in the afternoon, and when Garst came on deck David asked anxiously if he believed the storm would continue long.

"Most always several days in these latitudes and at this time of the year," answered the sailor.

"There's no getting ashore in a canoe tonight then?"

"Not in anything, on this shore, sir. As well as that young fellow handles those eggshells, he'd never do it with this sea."

At ten o'clock Donald suddenly appeared in the main cabin.

"Who's the cook and where's the galley?" were his first words when he saw Rollin.

"Garst has been doing the cooking," was the answer. "I'll get him out of his forecastle."

Rollin remained on deck while Mr. Temple and David rushed down into the cabin to see Donald.

"Why didn't you sleep longer?" asked the physician.

"I had enough for the present, and I guess it was my stomach that wakened me. I'll get the Indians up, too, and have them begin to get things ready."

He started toward the companionway, but David called him back.

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"What are you going to do? You can't possibly leave the ship in this storm. If you did you could never get to land."

"Is it blowing harder than in the afternoon?" asked Donald,

"Far harder, and the snow is thicker than ever," said Mr. Temple.

"Then we'll have to run the ship down to the head of the inlet," answered Donald readily. "We can't afford to lose more time here because it's blowing. I had hoped she'd blow herself out."

"But can we do that?" demanded Mr. Temple.

"We've got to do it. I think I can tickle that engine into a snort or two and Garst can navigate. It's not more than ten miles and then we'll be in the shelter of the head of the inlet. Sit down while I eat and I'll tell what I'd like to do."

Garst appeared with some food, which he had kept warm on the galley stove, and Donald began to eat.

"Can we raise the anchors if I get the engine to going?" he asked the seaman between mouthfuls.

"Yes, sir. There's a power winch. And if we had trouble we could get up the two men who are in chains."

"Better do it alone if we can. And do you know the variation of the compass here, and whether it is reliable enough, so close to the magnetic pole, to steer just a bit off of northwest?"

"I was at the wheel when we dropped anchor here, sir, and I remember the variation."

"And the engine is strong enough to kick against this wind?"

"Easily, sir, for the tide would be with us."

"Fine," commented Donald. "Then as soon as I get through here we'll be off."

"Now for my plan," he said to Mr. Temple and David when Garst had gone. "To gain time, and because it may be necessary to travel hard and fast either on land or water, I would like to go alone with my two Indians."

He looked inquiringly at the others and then added quickly—

"I know I failed once, but I've got to make good this time."

"I suppose it is for Mr. Temple to decide," said David. "I believe you are best fitted for the work."

"I agree," declared the father instantly, "but what do you plan to do?"

"IT'S this way," said Donald. "The Indians consider Miss Temple some sort of a goddess. They are not going to hold her prisoner against her will if she is afforded an opportunity to escape. She is going to have more power over that band than I ever heard of any one having over Indians.

"It is my idea to get in touch with the band and send one of my Indians in among them with a note telling her how and when to get away. It is even possible, you know, that we might have her lead the entire band back here to the ship. The legend says that she is to take them away on the sea, and they would think it all right for her to have a ship ready. From what you know of the situation, you can see that such a plan is easily possible, the details to be worked out, of course, after I arrive on the spot and see how the ground lies."

"It seems probable," said David, and Mr. Temple nodded.

"But I don't intend to depend upon that alone," continued David. "I'm going to take along all the things I can find on board the ship that would be novel and startling to the Indians. My flash-light filled them with terror at first. A battery of them would accomplish a lot on a dark night."

"We have several," offered Mr. Temple.

"And there is an acetylene searchlight, a powerful one, for shore work," added David.

"Fine!" exclaimed Donald. "Binoculars would help, and how about a phonograph?"

"There's one in the forecastle and a thousand records," answered David.

"I'll take that, with soprano solos. They would be most impressive. Anything else?"

With the help of David and Mr. Temple he made a list of a number of things which would startle, awe, bewilder or terrorize the Indians, among them the rockets always carried by a ship for use as signals in case of distress.

"I may not have to use any of them," said Donald when they had finished, "but we can't take chances. I think, however, that a note in Miss Temple's hands, a dark night, a waiting canoe and the trick will be done. Only we must hurry before those Indians discover she is only flesh and blood like themselves. Now we'll get the ship under way. Volberg will certainly be surprised in the morning when he finds the *Anywhere* gone."

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He jumped up from his place at the table and started toward the companionway, David and Mr. Temple following. The enthusiasm, optimism and confidence of the young man served to encourage the others and to bring assurance that Georgia's rescue would be possible in his hands, if any.

Rollin and the Indians were told of the plan to move the ship, Garst gave minute instructions as to what was to be done to get it under way, each man was assigned to a task and instructed and drilled, and at last, after an hour's preparations, the sound of the engine's exhaust was heard. Garst immediately shouted orders from the wheel, there was a creaking of gear and a tremor through the ship as just enough power was applied to ease up on the cables.

Though the wind still blew a gale and the snow was flying as thickly as ever, the bay forming the end of the inlet was not wide enough to permit a sea that would bother the *Anywhere*. The waves were short and choppy, rendered more so by the tide flowing against them, and the deck heaved but little after the anchors were up and full power was applied to the propeller.

When they had been under way fifteen minutes Donald left the engine to join Garst at the wheel.

"What are we making?" he asked.

"Maybe five knots."

"Well, we can keep that up for an hour and a half. There isn't an island between here and the head of the inlet and we'll have to take our chances on reefs. If we head off the wind just a little, keep to the east, we'll bring up not far north of the southern of the two rivers that flow out of Baker Lake. There are high banks there and I imagine plenty of water near shore. The wind can't kick up any sea, and we can get the canoes off and up the river."

He returned to the engine-room, where David soon joined him. Donald repeated his plans as he had told them to Garst.

"I'm taking two canoes," he added, "to keep that margin of safety. Charley and I paddled one all the way from Dubawnt Lake, and Eltsi the other, so we will be accustomed to traveling that way. Then, if anything happens, if we are separated, or things go wrong, we can have one canoe cached along the river that flows into Baker Lake and there will be a chance to escape. You have canoes aboard, haven't you?"

"Yes, there are still an eighteen-footer and a larger one. We brought four."

"How about the stuff I'm to take?"

"I'll gather that together right away."

"And grub. Lots of it. Two hundred pounds at least," shouted Donald as David climbed the ladder.

At the end of half an hour Donald slowed the engine down to quarter-speed and went on deck. The night was as black as ever, the wind as strong, but there was a noticable decrease in the size of the waves. The *Anywhere* rode on an even keel and with almost no pitching.

"We're getting close in," shouted Donald in the seaman's ear.

"A mile, I would judge," was the answer. "You think we can get in close, sir."

"I'd risk half a mile or less, if you can guess that close."

"We'll try it, sir. Have one of the Indians keep a lookout at the bow. They have the best eyes. I'll watch the sea. It should be quiet water that close to a windward shore. And have the doctor come aft, sir. Then you be ready at the throttle."

"Aye, aye, sir!" cried Donald gaily as he started below.

Ten minutes later, standing with his hands on the clutch lever, he received Garst's signal to stop. He heard the chains rattle as the anchors went down, and then came a frantic signal to reverse at full speed. He opened the throttle, jerked back the lever and then, at another signal, threw out the clutch. When the bell remained silent he climbed the ladder and was soon on deck.

"We seem to be in a snug little harbor, though mighty close to shore, sir," said Garst, whom he found going forward. The cliffs must be right above us to shut off the wind that way."

"Much water?"

"I'm just going to use the lead, sir."

Donald went into the main cabin, where he found a box and three large bags containing the supplies David had gathered.

"Warm clothing for Miss Temple?" he asked first.

"A bag of it, with bedding," answered David. There is food in this bag and all the paraphernalia I could find in this box. The other bag contains blankets and extra clothing for you and the Indians."

"That's fine," said Donald as he picked up a bag and started for the deck.

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"You're not going to start now?" asked Mr. Temple as he entered the cabin.

"Right away," replied Donald. "We have twenty-five miles of river and we want to be on that while the tide helps. This river flows backward twice a day."

Quickly the canoes were got overboard and loaded. The Indians lowered themselves into their places and David, Rollin, Mr. Temple and Garst gathered around Donald as he prepared to follow.

"Now, remember," he said, "this may take some time, a week, perhaps ten days. I'd stay here two weeks anyhow before taking any action if I were you. If this wind holds I can't travel on Baker Lake and it may be four days before I can reach the site of the Indian camp. By that time it may be moved up-stream, and if it is I'll follow until I find it.

"You can see that I may have a long chase, and the longer it is the longer it will take me to return. So make it three weeks anyhow. I'll expect to find you here then. If for any reason you leave before or after that time, build a cache on shore here with a good lot of supplies and some coal in it. So long, and good luck."

He started down the ladder but Mr. Temple grasped him by both shoulders and by the aid of the lantern Rollin was holding on the rail, looked into Donald's eyes.

"God bless you, boy," the older man faltered as his hands gripped fiercely.

"Thank you, sir," answered Donald in confusion. "I'd do anything to get her back."

His voice trembled and his eyes fell, for in the hurry of preparation he had failed to consider just what his journey meant to himself as well as to the father. Then he felt a hand grasping his own and looked up to see David Baird. For a moment the two looked steadily at each other. David's grip loosened suddenly, but only for an instant, and then it tightened harder than ever.

"Good luck, old man," he said and turned away.

Donald dropped down the ladder at once and crawled into the stern of his canoe.

"Good-by," he called and disappeared in the darkness and snow.

There was a cheer from the rail and then silence as the four stood listening to the last faint sounds of paddles striking gunwales. Then they turned away without a word to each other and went below.

DONALD'S task was not to be so easy as he had led Dr. Baird and Mr. Temple to believe. They crept slowly along the shore for a mile, afraid to leave it very far, unable to paddle swiftly in the darkness because of the danger of striking something. Donald and Charley kept ahead, feeling their way along, and Eltsi hung close at the stern of the leading canoe.

At last they knew thay had turned nearly at right angles to their original courses and a few minutes later they were sure they had felt the grip of the tide in the river. For two hours they were borne swiftly along, paddling to keep the canoes straight and risking shoals or rapids. At the end of the second hour the snow had ceased falling and at the end of three hours the wind had begun to die down. Daylight came soon afterward and the shores of the river showed on either side. When the light became stronger the wide stretch of Baker Lake was seen ahead, but when they reached it they were forced ashore by the sea which was still running.

They cooked breakfast and waited because there was nothing else to do. The wind continued to fall but the seas still ran high. It was luck Donald had not expected in the light of his past experience with subarctic storms and he immediately began to force it. Though the waves rolled far higher than when he had put out to the *Anywhere* with Garst and Charley, they did not break, and by ten o'clock the canoes were dancing along the southern shore of Baker Lake.

Donald had taken more than a day, paddling alone, to make the journey from the mouth of the unnamed river they sought to the eastern end of Baker Lake, and he had estimated the distance at thirty or forty miles. Now he and the Indians paddled until dark and when at last, tired out, they got to shore, he figured that they still had ten miles to go to reach the river. The Indian camp was another fifteen miles upstream.

Donald slept six hours and then wakened the Indians. In three hours they were at the mouth of the river. The current was swift but clear of bad rapids, except in one place where it would be necessary to portage canoes and outfit around a small falls. From there only five miles remained, he knew, and when he reached it in the middle

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of the afternoon Donald called a halt. He did not want to approach the Indians until after dark, as his first plan was to have one of his men slip into camp and get a note into Georgia's hands.

The rest afforded Donald an opportunity to make his plans known to Charley and Eltsi. They listened without comment while he told what he wanted to do. Then, in detailing his ideas should the first fail, he explained what he hoped to accomplish with the paraphernalia he had brought along.

Still the Indians only listened and when at last Donald looked for paper and pencil in one of the bags, they got up and went down to the bank of the river, where they began to talk in low tones. Donald wrote several notes to Georgia, each worded to meet a certain set of circumstances, and placed them in a pocket to be ready when he should need one.

The Indians returned at last and sat down in front of him.

"We are not going farther," Charley announced calmly.

"What's the matter?" demanded Donald in amazement.

"This woman is a spirit woman," replied the Indian. "She is the good spirit of these Indians. If we help take her away they will conjure us, and we will never reach our homes and our families again. We are going to take one canoe and one rifle and some of the food and go back the way we have come. If you wish to come with us, all right. If not, we will go to Lake Athabasca alone."

Donald, at the first words, was conscious of the finality of their manner. He knew Indians of several tribes, but he had never seen any so determined, so set in their decisions, so impervious to argument of any sort, so lacking in a sense of obligation or responsibility, as the Chippewayans. But because his case was so hopeless, because the necessity was so great, he pleaded, threatened, offered inducements, attempted everything he could think of, only to have Charley answer—

"We are not going farther up this river."

When at last they became insistent upon having a canoe and a rifle, Donald knew the futility of argument. They would take what they wanted anyway, for their fear of what lay up the river would drive them to any means to escape.

Wearily he nodded assent. Instantly the two had the canoe in the water and five minutes later were paddling away, leaving Donald alone on the shore.

Dully he sat there looking after them. One moment, seeing aid that was so necessary to Georgia's rescue surely leaving him, he was tempted to send a bullet after them. The next he admitted the uselessness of such an act. Superstition, the great force of primitive life, against which any Indian is powerless, had taken them from him. He was not strong enough to battle with it. So he sat helplessly and watched them disappear around a bend.

It was then the complete realization of his position came to him. He could not return to the ship for aid because he could not risk the possibility of the Indians moving on. If he went on alone he was one man against a primitive, uncontrollable band become impervious to any influence in the hysterical delight and complete confidence of having been chosen for marked favor by the spirits. It meant that again he must do what he had promised he would not do, take a chance in the rescue of Georgia. And should that chance fail, Georgia's own safety, her life, would pay.

CHAPTER XIII

SAGA! SAGA!

WHEN Georgia Temple, fleeing from what she believed to be Volberg and his men, acted upon Charley's excited gestures and retreated down-stream toward the camp where she had first met Donald Whitney, she planned, with the Indian's help, to get into her canoe and paddle eastward.

When she crossed the deserted camp-site and met Volberg face to face at the mouth of the gully, the complete surprise robbed her of thought or movement. She stood still as the mate came closer and at his sharp command followed him to the beach, where four seamen were standing about the boat.

Her first intimation that her father and David were again in control of the ship came when, in a dense fog, she heard David's voice from above—

"Keep away there, or I'll fire!"

Her impulse was to cry out, to call to David that she was in the boat, but Volberg,

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who held the tiller and sat directly behind her, clapped a hand over her mouth the instant David called and thrust her down into the bottom between the quarters of caribou the sailors had found.

"Who's that?" called the mate.

"Doctor Baird," came the sharp reply. "Keep away or I'll fire."

The sailors had ceased rowing but the boat's momentum had not been stopped. Georgia caught a glimpse of the *Anywhere's* bow in the fog and then heard the report of a rifle. The bullet struck just beyond.

"Pull away!" commanded Volberg as he threw over the tiller.

The mate cursed savagely as the seamen, fearing another shot from the ship, rowed frantically. In a moment the *Anywhere* was lost in the fog behind them. Volberg, with the aid of a compass, set his course for the beach, where they landed in a few minutes. The boat was drawn up, the meat unloaded and carried to the rocks, and while some of the men started a fire and kept guard over Georgia, Volberg went down the beach calling to the men he had left to guard Mr. Temple and David.

They saw the fire and came down to join the others before the mate's return, and from their excited reports to the other seamen Georgia learned how her father and David had been rescued by Donald. Volberg, on his return, listened silently to the story. None of the men were able to explain who Donald was, whence he had come or what his purpose was other than that he was against them.

"It doesn't make any difference who he is or what he intends to do," the mate finally commented in a savage tone. "They may have the ship, but I guess there'll be no trouble in getting it again," and he looked significantly at Georgia.

The remainder of the afternoon and in the evening, while the entire crew sat about the fire, the mate and his men discussed the situation and made plans. Georgia listened attentively, and the more she heard the more hopeless seemed the position of herself and those on the ship.

It was not what they planned so much as the spirit dictating their proposals that brought terror to the girl. In these men, sitting beside a driftwood blaze on a barren shore, she saw a group animated now by one purpose, the greatest purpose that sways men's actions—self-preservation. She saw them as desperate, daring, heartless beasts at bay, men realizing that they had cut off all the usual avenues of escape by their mutiny and that now they could hope to live only through the death of herself and those on the ship.

It was the first time that she had become conscious of the really serious nature of the situation. She had been afraid before, but now, in the comments and decisions of the seamen, in the savage attitude of Volberg, she saw that up there on that lonely shore, with no possibility of help from an outside source, there was to be a war of extermination between the two parties.

As sailors, and therefore perfectly aware of the consequences of their action, the men accepted instantly the alternative. In the face of their loss of the ship even the supposed treasure was not considered. It was escape, escape from the sub-arctic seas before the early Winter caught them, escape from the consequences of their mutiny, that they sought, and Georgia shuddered as she heard the lengths to which they would go to accomplish their purpose.

There was only one bright spot for her. Without reason, without estimating the odds against him, she had faith in the efforts of Donald Whitney. Since she had first seen him that night on the beach after her escape from the ship she had placed complete confidence in him. His very attitude was inspiring, while his strength and ability, his courage and his resourcefulness, coupled with the unexpected and romantic nature of his appearance upon the scene, had enshrouded him with the glamour of knighthood.

Donald was the subject of much conjecture among the seamen. Once Volberg, from his position across the fire, asked Georgia who he was. She answered merely that she did not know.

"You do know," he snarled as he strode around the blaze and grasped her shoulder. "Who is he?"

"I don't know," she repeated defiantly.

"You do know," he retorted as he gripped her arm until she was ready to cry out with the pain.

He gave her a quick shake, then a shove, and returned to his place.

"You'll tell before we get through with you," he said.

Georgia had little sleep that night. It was very cold and the fire was not large.

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The fog seemed to penetrate to her bones and what little rest she had was only fitful dreaming.

When morning came Volberg gave the order to move to the site of the village. The fog was still thick and Georgia could not catch a glimpse of the ship out in the bay. She went with the men as she was commanded to do, but even now that she was to see the ruins they had come to find she hardly realized their presence. All through the night she had expected some action by Donald Whitney, some ruse or attack, some evidence at least that he was ready to help her.

With the coming of daylight she felt that nothing could be done, and she had practically abandoned hope of rescue when the first startled exclamation came from one of the sailors and they all turned to see the band of Indians, strung out in a long line, emerge from the mist clouds and bear down upon them.

Georgia's first thought was that of the seamen. She saw only a band of savages unmistakably hostile. The dim figures in the fog, the brandishing spears, the shrill cries, struck equal terror in the girl and the sailors. Her ears were more keen, her eyes quicker, however, and she was the first to catch the hoarser cry from one end of the line. She looked to see the tall figure of Donald Whitney, his rifle held before him, approaching swiftly.

The real battle she did not see. The sailors retreated before the advancing Indians, while she stood still until Donald reached her. She listened to his commands and saw him dash on with the others. She heard the shots of the revolvers, but the fog hid the combat from view.

Then suddenly the Indians appeared out of the mist. They came in a group, swiftly, straight toward her, and before she realized it had surrounded her with a protecting circle. At the time Georgia did not notice the deference, even awe, in which the savages seemed to hold her. She saw only that they intended to form a body-guard and were anxious that she leave. At once she started forward with them.

ACROSS the enclosure, out through the rock cut and on south among the hills they led the way. Georgia, because anything was better than to be in danger of again falling into Volberg's hands, and because Donald Whitney had explained that the Indians were her friends and were aiding in her escape, went on without question.

After half an hour she began to look back, to wonder why Donald did not join them. Every time she hesitated the Indians pointed ahead and she went on. After an hour had passed and she was becoming tired from the pace set by her escort, Georgia began to fear for Donald's safety. The Indians could not have fought long enough to wipe out the band of sailors. Donald had been left alone with them, probably had unexpectedly encountered a number in the fog and been overcome.

As the Indians hurried on, intent evidently on getting as far away from the scene of the battle as possible, the girl had her first misgivings as to the sincerity of their efforts in Donald's behalf. They looked at her in awe, showed her every deference, but the intensity of their purpose to travel as rapidly as possible was dismaying. Every mile, she knew, took her farther and farther from the ship.

At noon the fog had disappeared and for the first time the Indians halted. Georgia, nearly exhausted, was glad of the opportunity to rest, and her hunger made her equally glad to eat of the dried, stringy, tasteless meat they offered her. After an hour they prepared to move on. Georgia pointed backward but they shook their heads and beckoned the other way. Then, forming a circle about her, they started on, and she could do nothing except accompany them.

By mid-afternoon she had given up all hope that Donald would overtake them and rescue her from this new danger. She could only think that he had been killed in the struggle with the sailors, or captured by them. She knew her father, Rollin and David were still on the ship, in ignorance of what had happened, wondering, probably, why Donald did not return with news of this latest development.

She did not consider escape because she saw that it would be useless. Even if she dared to make a stand against the Indians, there was nothing to point the way backward over the barren country she had traveled.

Before night came Georgia was completely exhausted by the forced march over rough, boulder-strewn going. Desperate in her weariness, she stopped and sat

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down. To her surprise the Indians immediately began to make preparations to camp. There was no wood, but some dry, black moss was gathered and what was nothing more than a smudge lighted.

The wind had been rising all afternoon and snow had begun to drive before it. The camp-site chosen was under the shelter of a high rock but even there the storm found them. As soon as she sat down Georgia was chilled to the bone. Several of the Indians, seeing her shiver, untied caribou robes they carried on their backs and offered them to her. She wrapped herself up in the soft skins. They were warm and windproof. Her shivering ceased, she became drowsy and in a few moments was asleep.

The next morning the Indians did not make any preparations to move until Georgia awakened. They offered her more of the dry, black, stringy meat, which she was glad to have, and when she had eaten they indicated that they were ready to begin the day's march.

All forenoon they went on, sometimes between bare, desolate hills, often across flats or prairies strewn with boulders. Never was there a sign of vegetation, except occasional patches of moss clinging to the rocks.

Georgia had risen that morning without hope. She continued only because she was with human beings, because to stay with them meant some sort of shelter and something to eat. She knew better than to think she could find her way back to the ship, and she had a sufficient knowledge of the country to be aware that there was no hope of rescue through white people.

The very hopelessness of her plight served to weaken her resistance to fatigue. Even had she been accustomed to walking, the rough nature of the going would have exhausted her. When noon came she felt that she could not go on and sat down upon a rock.

Immediately the Indians gathered about her and talked excitedly. At last one opened a skin bag and drew out a small piece of dried meat. Others searched through their equipment but the one little piece was all that was forthcoming. They gave it to her readily, but she saw it was the last they had and that they were going hungry.

The meat, unpalatable as it was, had a revitalizing effect. After half an hour, when the Indians had become restless, Georgia arose and they started on. By mid-afternoon exhaustion again overcame her. She dropped hopelessly to the ground on the summit of a ridge they were crossing. She was so weary she felt that she could not take another step. Hope, too, had fled absolutely, and she believed the end had come. In her despair she waved her arms as an indication that the Indians could go on and leave her. For a moment they conferred excitedly and then, to her surprise, started down the opposite side of the ridge in a body.

For a time Georgia lay flat on her back on the summit, her eyes closed, her mind in a stupor. Her exhaustion was so great, her hope so slight, that both spirit and body succumbed. When she did return to consciousness she realized that a peculiar rattling noise had disturbed her. She opened her eyes and looked up at the sky, listening intently. The sound, she discovered, was not one tapping, but a chorus of tiny, rattling noises, and it came from the foot of the ridge on which she lay.

Georgia turned over quickly and lifted herself to one elbow. Below her in the valley, streaming through a narrow opening between the ridge and the hill beyond and spreading out fan-shaped over the flat, was a great herd of antlered animals. The strange noise came from the rattling of the dew claws on the stones, while so thickly were the animals wedged in the straight-sided gorge their horns scraped and clattered as they struggled through.

That they were caribou Georgia was instantly aware. And that caribou meant food in that country had been impressed upon her in Chicago by the many books on exploration she had read. At once she crawled backward until the crest of the ridge hid her from view and then stood up and looked down on the other side where the Indians had gone.

She saw them at once, gathered about a smoldering moss-fire in the hollow and began to wave. She was seen instantly and at her wild beckonings the Indians jumped to their feet and scrambled toward her through the boulders. When the fastest reached her side she pointed over the ridge and laid a finger on her lips as a sign of caution. The Indian crawled higher, peeped over the crest, and then turned and stared in wonder at the girl.

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Others followed him and then all slipped back beside Georgia. They talked in whispers a moment and then at a signal scattered, some going in one direction along the ridge, the others down and around the hill to the rear of the caribou herd.

Georgia, excited by the prospects of the chase, forgetting for the moment her own predicament, crept back to the crest and looked down. The caribou had all strung out in the open, level spot, the last having come through the opening. There were several hundred, and they grazed among the boulders on the little white moss they could find.

As Georgia watched there came a shout from the left and she saw a dozen Indians spring up in the face of the herd. The deer stood for an instant and then turned before the advancing men and started on a gallop back through the draw.

As the first of them reached it an Indian sprang out, his spear raised. Another and another leaped from behind boulders and down from the rock walls of the gorge. The frightened animals, pressed on by those behind, could not turn. Spears leaped out and back. Arrows flashed through the air, and the caribou dropped, dropped, dropped, until the ground at the opening between the hills was covered with bodies.

Finding their escape cut off at the rear, the bulk of the herd started up the opposite side of the little valley. They seemed to flow up over the crest, so thickly did they press together, but when the last had gone there were at least a hundred bodies lying at the bottom.

The Indians, wildly excited, looked up from their slaughter to see Georgia watching them. Immediately they began to dart about from one body to another, and soon the entire band had started up the hill toward her, their hands, dripping blood, holding what Georgia saw were the tongues of the animals. These were laid at her feet, while the eyes and attitudes of the Indians showed unmistakably that their awe and reverence had increased to the point of worship.

IT WAS the first intimation Georgia had had that she was not a prisoner, that she was something more to this strange band of savages than a human being. At first she was startled and mystified but almost instantly she recognized in it a power which might lead to her return to the ship. From that moment she began to wield it, try it out in little things.

While the Indians returned to butcher their kill, she took two of the tongues to the fire they had made. She found a battered copper kettle among their equipment and, after melting snow, set the tongues to boil over the smudge.

Before they were cooked the Indians returned, each carrying a load of meat. They indicated that they were ready to go on, but Georgia shook her head and refused to get up. When they insisted she ignored them for a time and then, with an impatient wave of her hand, let them know that they could go on if they wished, but that she intended to remain.

There was a whispered conference and at last all except half a dozen started on, each with a load of meat. The others gathered more moss, started another fire and began the preparation of their own meal.

When the caribou tongues were cooked Georgia ate what she wanted and then rolled up in her robes. She went to sleep almost immediately and did not waken until a wild, excited babble brought her to an upright position with a jerk. Before her were gathered more than one hundred people, men, women and children, all skin-clad, dirty, all excited and talking shrilly. They pointed to their own hair and indicated Georgia's, jabbered on about her face and her clothing, but none was bold enough to come close to her.

For a moment Georgia was frightened, but, remembering her discovery of the day before, she arose, frowned upon the mob and waved them away. Instantly they complied, backing off among the boulders of the hillside, still talking and still watching her in wonder. Georgia waved impatiently toward the top of the ridge and they scampered away to the scene of the slaughter.

By noon all the meat had been butchered and made ready for packing. The Indians came streaming back, all laden heavily, even to the children. The fact that the children were with them, and that the entire band had appeared so early in the morning, led Georgia to believe that their camp could not be far away. Accordingly she indicated her willingness to go on and, followed by the

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wildly excited Indians and escorted by several of the chief hunters, she went out of the valley and on toward the southwest.

After walking steadily for more than an hour Georgia heard a low, rumbling thunder ahead of them. It grew louder, and at last from the top of a hill she saw a mist cloud suspended over a valley. The Indians kept on straight toward this and finally led the way over the crest of a ridge and down to a wide, flat open space beside a large river. Near the water and grouped closely together were eighteen or twenty skin tents. Just beneath the site of the camp the river broke over a falls, the thunder of which was muffled by the deep gorge into which it tumbled.

The Indians streamed down over the gentle incline toward the camp, shouting and yelping excitedly. Georgia was led immediately to a small tent set off by itself. She entered to find many caribou robes carpeting the ground and she had hardly finished examining the place when the flap was thrown back and the bodies of two caribou dumped down at the door.

It was mid-afternoon when they arrived at the camp and for two hours Georgia lay in her teepee and rested. In that time she was not molested, though there was a continued undertone of excited comment outside the tent and she knew that the women and children, still consumed with wonder and curiosity, were gathered without.

At sunset the girl lifted the flap and looked out for the first time. In an open space between the teepees most of the Indians were gathered around several large fires of driftwood. Stone kettles were sending up steaming clouds, and there was a strong odor of boiling meat. Children ran about chewing strips of raw flesh. The hunters lay on the ground talking and resting. The women tended the fires and talked incessantly in shrill, high-pitched tones.

That the entire band was preparing for a monster feast was clearly evident. From the scanty store of meat the hunters had with them when they had taken her away from the coast, she believed that a fast was about to be broken and she saw how her accidental discovery of the caribou herd had in reality saved the band from possible starvation.

As the girl sat in her teepee looking out upon the scene before her she began, for the first time, to piece together the strange happenings of the last two days. The blue eyes, the brown hair and beards of some of the Indians, the leadership of Donald Whitney, his hurried statement at the village, all meant only one thing. These were the white Indians, the tribe they had come north to find, the Indians with whom Donald had lived.

She found their awe of her inexplicable. It could not be simply because she was white, for Donald had told nothing of such an attitude. To add to her bewilderment, as darkness came the Indians approached and indicated that she was to join them. They led the way to a mat of deerskins that had been prepared for her, and a little apart from the others.

Then it was that the saga of Snorri Gellison first occurred to Georgia. In the light of this everything became clear. It was fantastical, unbelievable, and yet it was unmistakably true. They believed her to be the goddess whom they had sought each year. This was the feast to celebrate her coming. Her discovery of the caribou had simply confirmed their belief in her supernatural powers. To them it was the first evidence of her ability.

The idea came to her with bewildering suddenness. Yet in the same instant she saw in it the means of her escape. Backed by the force of an old Norse legend which had persisted for a thousand years, her power was enormous. She could use it to return to the ship.

With Georgia to plan was to act. She would try out this power at once. She arose from the mat of deerskins. The Indians became silent. When she saw that she had the attention of all she pointed to her breast and cried in a loud voice:

"Saga! Saga!"

Instantly the savages were in a turmoil. They shouted and danced, chattered and jabbered and for a moment seemed to be working themselves into a frenzy of joy.

"Saga! Saga!" they cried.

Georgia raised her hands and indicated that they were to begin the feast. They obeyed at once, and while some of the women brought meat to her the others began helping themselves to the steaming, half-boiled flesh.

For more than an hour the feast continued. The entire band seemed to be starved and the amount of caribou that

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was consumed was startling. Not until the kettles were empty and the last bit of broth drained did the feasting cease.

Then, as each man finished, he arose and began a slow, monotonous dance about the fire. The children formed a wide circle, the women brought wood and piled it upon the central blaze. More men began to dance. The figures moved faster, the low, humming, guttural song became louder, then shrill and excited. The women sat upon the ground and moaned and wailed in time to the swiftly moving feet.

Georgia, from her seat on the deerskins, watched the dance in complete fascination. She recognized in it a celebration of the fulfilment of a legend which had persisted through the centuries, that in her coming the Indians believed they were to be led away to a land of warmth and plenty. She had no intention of starting that night, but the next morning she planned to take them back over the hills to the ship.

As the dance became more frenzied the fire burned low until there was only a bed of glowing coals around and around which the men circled more swiftly than ever. The light was just sufficient to silhouette them as they passed before Georgia and to cast a faint reflection on the glistening, greasy faces of the women and children in the outer circle.

The singing became louder and louder, the dancers whirled faster. Then with the suddenness of a flash of lightning the entire scene was illuminated for an instant by a blinding glare.

In the darkness that followed the singing ceased, the dancers stood stock-still. Again the light flashed, dazzling, a pencil of brilliance that picked out the dancers and watchers, brought them into quick, sharp relief, and then vanished to leave everything in inky blackness.

Georgia, as startled as the Indians, sat on her robes and stared at the now barely glowing bed of coals. No one moved. A child whimpered, but fright choked the cry in its throat.

The breathless stillness suddenly was pierced by a high, screeching wail. It came, not from the camp, not from any of the Indians, but from the ridge to the north. It rose and fell. There was a pause. Then clearly, unmistakably, a high, clear soprano voice called—

"Come, come!"

CHAPTER XIV

DONALD'S GODDESS

GEORGIA had been as dumfounded as the Indians, but even though the words, as clear as they were startling, revealed instantly that a song from a once popular light opera was being played on a phonograph, her surprise was too great to permit action.

While the Indians had been frozen by fear, she was held motionless by bewilderment.

Again the light flashed upon the scene, so blinding and dazzling that no one could look toward the crest of the ridge, whence it came. It did not vanish this time but, like a huge, unblinking eye, looked down upon the camp and the circle of terror-stricken Indians.

Still Georgia did not move, and once more the sound of the soprano's voice broke the stillness—

"Come, come, I love you; come, come, I——"

The familiar words and music served more than anything else to bring Georgia to a realization of what was happening. With a glad, quick cry she sprang to her feet.

Instantly the Indians relaxed, began to whisper, to shift their positions. Their movement brought Georgia's mind into action and she turned and faced them, her back to the light.

Slowly she raised her arms. With gestures as unmistakable as she could make them she indicated that she would go away, but that they were to remain. She would be gone a short time and then would return and lead them away.

Without hurrying, with several backward glances, once even stopping and waving her arms to the group, she began to walk slowly up the side of the ridge toward the light.

Behind her the Indians stood or sat as she had left them. They could not look straight into the bright eye on the hill, but they could see the girl going toward it. As they watched she went on and on and seemed to be swallowed by it.

"Fine," came a low voice as Georgia, herself blinded by the light, neared the top of the ridge. "Keep straight on into it. Steady. Don't hurry. There."

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Something snapped, the light vanished, a hand grasped hers and she was jerked forward in the darkness and down the other side of the ridge.

"We'll have to hurry," repeated the voice, which she recognized as Donald Whitney's. "They may come up to investigate, and we need every second."

Though she could not see anything, so blinded had she been by the light, Georgia ran on down the hill as fast as she could. Donald still held her hand and there was a smooth path beneath her feet.

"There," he whispered as he slowed to a walk, and began to feel his way more carefully. "The canoe's right here. I have it. Into the bow. All right? We're off."

He leaped into the stern, thrust his paddle against the shore and shoved out into the current. In a moment they were being whirled away in the darkness.

"Are you alone?" asked Georgia.

"Yes," he whispered, "but keep quiet for a while."

They rushed on in the darkness, Donald paddling swiftly though there was a strong current. Georgia leaned back against a thwart. As her eyes became accustomed to the darkness she could make out the black lines of the shore on either side. Where she was going she did not know. Whether the ship was near or far away, whether it was still in control of her father and David, she had not learned.

And yet she felt a strange content. The man who had appeared so often at a crucial moment, whose resourcefulness and daring had risen to so many situations and dominated them in the last few days, was in the stern of the canoe. For the present it was sufficient.

"I don't believe we're followed now," Donald finally said as he laid the paddle on the gunwale. "Wasn't that about as melodramatic and stagey as anything you ever heard of?"

"You mean the light and the phonograph?"

"Yes. I wonder if those Indians have moved yet. And when they do climb the ridge and find the searchlight and the phonograph they won't be any the wiser. Some day when we're out of this mess we're going to have a big laugh over that. Who would ever suppose that there is a band of people on this globe who could be fooled in such a simple way?"

"Is every one all right?" asked Georgia anxiously.

"When I left them two days ago, and I don't think there is any reason to believe anything has happened in the meantime. We moved the *Anywhere* to the end of the inlet, about ten miles west of the village, and Volberg and his men are probably still wondering what has become of it."

"How long will it take us to get back?"

"That's hard telling. The ship is sixty or seventy miles east of the mouth of this river. With good luck, it will take two days, and if there is a storm we'll simply have to wait until it is over."

"Do you mean you came up here all alone?" exclaimed Georgia.

"I didn't start alone. Charley and Eltsi came with me, but the Indian showed in them for the first time this Summer and just below here they refused to come any farther. They took a canoe and started back for Lake Athabasca. I couldn't go back to the ship to get help for fear the Indians would take you and go on south. So I went on and did the best I could."

"You're wonderful!" whispered the girl.

"You are!" Donald replied quickly. "I was sure you would see through the game and play up to it back there in the Indian camp."

"But what you have done! You regained control of the ship, rescued father and David from the crew, and now you have rescued me three times. We'll never be able even to show our appreciation."

"Now don't talk that way, please. I've had great fun doing this and I'm only too glad that I happened to appear on the scene. There is one thing you folks may have to do, however, and that is to take me out."

"Of course," said Georgia. "We want you to come with us. But how are we going to get back? We can't sail that ship without a crew."

"No, but there is still a way out. If we can't leave this Fall we can get the ship into a good place and tie her up for the Winter. Then, as soon as the first ice forms along the shore, I'll strike out for Fort Churchill, down the coast of the bay. From there I can get to York Factory, where the Government has a wireless station. A message to New York would mean a relief ship next Summer."

"And we'd have to stay here until then!" cried Georgia in consternation.

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"Well, I could get dog teams up here and take you out to York Factory. From there it isn't any more than two hundred miles to the end of steel on the new Hudson's Bay Railroad coming up from La Pas, on the Saskatchewan. That should land you in Chicago by February."

Donald spoke lightly, as if his nine hundred-mile journey to York Factory down a dangerous coast, across the mouths of many rivers, would be easy. Georgia, who had read everything available on the country before leaving Chicago, who knew distances and maps thoroughly and understood something of conditions of sub-arctic travel, was not deceived. But before she could speak again Donald began to paddle toward the right bank of the river and she heard the sound of falls down-stream.

"Just a short portage here," he said as the bow touched the rocks. "My grub and outfit are at the other end and from there to the *Anywhere* is straight canoeing, unless the wind gets bad on Baker Lake."

Donald carried the canoe and Georgia the paddles. They had difficulty in the darkness over the rough, rocky portage, which led up a steep hill and down sharply to the river on the other side. But in twenty minutes the canoe was again in the water, the food and the camping-outfit had been loaded, Georgia was wrapped in a blanket and made comfortable in the bow and they were on their way.

"Aren't you going to stop to rest?" she asked when they had gone several miles below the falls.

"Not so long as the weather continues this way," Donald answered as he paddled steadily on. "We should be on Baker Lake in another hour, with this current, and then we have a long stretch of open lake travel. Without a wind we can go right along, but with one we must go ashore, and that might mean several days in a miserable camp with no fuel."

"Then I'm going to help paddle," announced Georgia.

"You take a rest," he commanded. "I can do very well alone now, but there may come a time when I need your help. Take a nap and I'll call you if I need you."

Georgia was very tired, and she was very comfortable, stretched out in the bow of the big canoe. The suggestion was hardly necessary, and Donald paddled on in silence. Hour after hour he continued with scarcely an interruption. At the mouth of the river he found a west wind, not too strong for nasty going and, while not exactly behind him for the first ten miles, at least helping a little.

IT WAS hard, monotonous work, but to Donald there was a certain stimulating effect in the ceaseless, countless strokes. Physically he was well able to stand the extreme exertion. He had been accustomed to nothing else every day for eight months. And to the hardened canoeist there is always an element of mystery in the capacity he has for going on and on long after he believes that his strength has vanished.

But to Donald the stimulus came from the bow of the canoe and from what that dimly outlined figure meant to him. The Crerar girl, the girl of those many Winter camp-fires, was with him in the flesh, was again safe and dependent upon his efforts. It seemed that he could go on indefinitely, that if she would only sleep there he could paddle to the end of the earth.

Dawn found him still shoving the canoe eastward and it was not until the first rays of the sun struck them that Georgia wakened. She sat up quickly, staring about her. Then she saw Donald, was reassured by his smile.

"You haven't been paddling all night?" were her first words.

"And we're half-way down the lake shore," he answered. "Hungry?"

She nodded and at once he turned the canoe landward.

"There won't be anything for a fire," he said, "but it will help to get out and stretch ourselves a bit."

Despite the absence of fuel or warm food there on the bleak, cold, barren shore, Donald tried to make the breakfast as merry as possible. Georgia laughed at his remarks, but always she quickly lapsed into silence.

"Are you sure they are all right?" she finally burst forth.

"Those on the ship? Of course. Even if Volberg finds them, there are four men on board, and they have two rifles and revolvers, while the crew have no long-range arms at all."

"But those men are desperate," insisted

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Georgia. "I know because I was with them and heard their plans. They would stop at nothing."

"Your father and the others won't take any chances, I know."

"But they might be surprised, or tricked, or overcome by sheer numbers."

"Come, come, Miss Temple. You are only piling up troubles for yourself. Garst says that they were scared to death by the Indians and of course they won't know but that the Indians are on the ship or ready to help your father and the others. There isn't any chance of anything happening and before dark you'll see for yourself."

"You don't mean we will reach the ship tonight?" she cried.

"If this wind holds, and the tide is right when we get to the river."

"But you can't stand it, paddling on forever like this."

Perhaps it was the tenderness of her solicitude, perhaps a lack of resistance caused by his fatigue. Donald never knew, never understood. He only realized that he had reached out and taken one of her hands in his, that he had spoken, words hoarse, stumbling, incoherent; that she had not withdrawn her hand, had even swayed a little nearer. Then his arms were around her.

"My Crerar girl!" he whispered as he kissed her. "You're my saga, my goddess, come to lead me out of the North country."

For a moment she clung to him and then quickly withdrew.

"Don't, Donald," she whispered. "Not now. Not yet. I can't, until we find the others, know they are safe. It isn't right, our—our being here like this when we don't know what has happened to them."

"Then we'll end that suspense as quickly as possible," he cried as he jumped to his feet. "Come, and we'll be off again."

Georgia protested, insisted that Donald rest, but he had opened a new reservoir of endurance and soon was shoving the canoe on faster than before. For a time Georgia paddled too, but after half an hour Donald persuaded her to turn around and sit down in the canoe.

"You can help more that way, just sitting there looking at me, and talking to me," he explained gaily. "See that faint line down there? That's the end of the lake. The river begins there, and if we reach it in time we can catch the tide."

At noon they ate lunch in the canoe, Donald sitting in the stern and keeping the craft headed before the wind, which had freshened a little during the morning. They had now rounded the great bulge in the southeastern shore-line and after the meal was finished Donald rigged a mast and sail with a paddle and tent. The wind was squarely behind them, and he had only to steer.

"We'll catch the tide!" he cried when the canoe surged away under sail. "That means we'll get there before dark tonight."

Georgia could not resist his infectious spirits. Her fears for the safety of her father and the others on shipboard vanished and she abandoned herself to the moment, that one, great, ecstatic moment that comes only once to any of us. They talked aimlessly, sometimes evasively, in that shy manner of the first hours of a confessed love. Only their eyes refused to keep silent on that subject which was uppermost in the hearts of each.

Donald's prediction of reaching the ship before dark seemed certain of fulfilment when they arrived at the river in the middle of the afternoon. They caught the grip of the tide and current combined when still some distance out in the lake, and before Donald could get the sail down they were whirled into the river and down the narrow, fjord-like stream. Donald had estimated the distance at twenty-five miles, but it was less and before sunset they turned a bend and saw the inlet beyond.

"We're there!" cried Georgia. "Only a little way now!"

"Yes, but we must be careful," said Donald. "We must sneak up on the ship and make sure that Volberg hasn't recaptured it or that he is not somewhere near enough to make trouble for us."

"Then you have known all along that there was danger!"

"I'm just as confident as ever that they are safe but I'm not going to take any chances like I did before."

They were swept on down to the inlet, but before they reached it Donald turned the canoe in toward the north bank of the river. He kept close to this, even after they had turned out of the stream, and paddled slowly.

"I think the ship is around that second point down there," he said. "Keep a sharp watch for it there or anywhere else, and I'll

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keep my eyes on shore. Volberg and his men may have found the ship and be on shore near it."

Breathlessly they kept on, turning into each small bay, skirting the shore closely. When they reached the first large point Donald turned ashore and climbed to the top of the cliff to make certain there was no danger in the bay beyond.

In this way they came at last to the point beyond which they expected to find the ship. Again they went ashore and Donald, his rifle in his hands, started to climb.

"I want to go, too," said Georgia. "I can't wait until you come back to tell me."

Hand in hand they scrambled up the steep hillside. Just at the crest Donald stopped.

"She's there," he whispered. "See the masts?"

Carefully they crept forward on hands and knees until they could look down into the bay beyond. Donald was a little ahead.

"Do you see them?" whispered Georgia as she came up to his side.

"Yes, but look. There are four men on deck, there near the wheel. It's your father and brother and Dr. Baird and Garst, I'm sure. But look down there at the beach at the head of the bay! It's Volberg and his men. Their boat's drawn up beside them."

"What does it mean?" asked Georgia after she had looked down. "See, Donald! They're fighting! Look!"

The group on the beach had been drawn up facing one man. Suddenly he had struck out viciously, and one of those in front of him dropped. Instantly the others charged in a mass and all went to the ground in a struggling, squirming heap. After a moment they began to untangle themselves and soon all had risen except three, one of whom was held down by the other two.

"It's Volberg," whispered Donald excitedly. "The others are tying him up."

The man on the ground was helped to his feet and his arms tied behind him. Then the entire group started toward the boat.

"It's Volberg," repeated Donald as the men shoved off the boat.

"But what does it mean?" demanded Georgia anxiously. "Look! They are going out to the ship. Why don't father and the others keep them off?"

None of the group near the wheel of the *Anywhere* moved as the boat came closer.

"They've come to an agreement with the crew," explained Donald excitedly. "The mutiny is over. See! They're going aboard, and they're taking Volberg on as a prisoner. Come on. We'll get out to the ship."

CHAPTER XV

AGAIN THE GODDESS LEAVES

IN THE excitement of receiving the crew on board none of the Temple party saw the approach of the canoe until Georgia hailed her father. Immediately a cheer went up that brought the crew tumbling out of the forecastle and the rail was lined fore and aft as the little craft came alongside. In a moment Georgia was in her father's arms, David and Rollin were gripping Donald's hands and clapping him on the back; questions were hurled faster than they could be answered and a general state of hysterical delight ruled on the after-deck.

Only Ed Garst failed to be moved by the excitement of the moment. He stood with his back to the starboard rail, his cap over his eyes and squinting forward to where the crew stood about the forecastle hatch. After a moment, when he had the opportunity, he touched Mr. Temple's shoulder and drew him aside.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, "but you don't intend to leave Volberg in the forecastle, do you?"

"Where else can we put him?" asked Mr. Temple in astonishment.

"Any place, except with the crew, sir. We've got to keep an eye on him or they'll turn him loose and we'll lose the ship, and our heads, too. And another thing, sir. I've got to bunk elsewhere than in the forecastle. They'd like nothing better than to catch me asleep there, sir."

"Nonsense, Garst," was the impatient reply. "This thing has got on your nerves. That crew is tickled to death to be back on any terms. Didn't you see the way they pitched into Volberg there on shore? They're glad to be out from under his power."

"You can believe that if you wish, sir," answered Garst stubbornly, "but I want to warn you now, as I did before, that there'll be trouble yet."

He turned away when he saw that Mr.

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Temple was impatient to rejoin Georgia and the others, but he remained on deck, and facing forward, when the entire party went below.

"Now," exclaimed the happy father when they were seated around the big table in the main cabin, "tell us all about it, how you got away and all."

Georgia told the story rapidly but fully. As she spoke her eyes constantly sought those of the young man who played so heroic a rôle in her narrative, and there was a new, joyous note in her voice. Rollin and her father were too engrossed in the startling sequence of events to see this changed Georgia, but David Baird, because he was watching her more closely, not only saw but also understood.

The girl, breathless, excited, swayed by the dramatic nature of the incidents she described, suddenly halted near the end. She had caught a glimpse of David's face, of the pain and misery he could not conceal. The man seemed to have aged in the previous week. His hair was more gray, the lines of his face were deeper. The eyes, seldom lighted, were more somber than before. Unconsciously Georgia compared him with her father, and David looked as old as the hysterically delighted, rejuvenated parent.

"That's all," she ended lamely. "You know the rest. We're here."

"Yes," broke in Donald, "and how about you folks. How did you get the crew back, and will they behave?"

"That's Rollin's work," answered Mr. Temple proudly. "The morning after you left with your Indians we held a council, Rollin, David, Garst and I. David and Garst were against making any advances. Garst said that, with your help when you returned, we could navigate the ship home safely, even if we were undermanned. David urged that it would be taking a chance with desperate men that should not be taken.

"But Rollin wouldn't listen to it. He realized that his wild tale of Spanish treasure, which he had told Volberg before he ever came aboard with his men, was responsible for the sailors' actions, and that the men had been misled and had believed that they were being cheated. He insisted that we should get into communication with them and that we should make them an offer of a safe passage home if they would work the ship.

"I was inclined to agree with David, to be safe, but Rollin insisted and I couldn't but admit the justice of his stand. Even if Volberg did plan this before he came aboard, as Rollin pointed out, we contributed to his delinquency, tempted him to crime. And, besides, I could not imagine our leaving without making an offer at least. It is one thing to kill a man in a fair fight and another to abandon him, even if he be a criminal, to certain death in such a country as this.

"The wind was blowing too hard that day for us to do anything toward getting into communication with the crew, and the next Rollin paddled over to the south shore but couldn't find them.

"Then this noon they all showed up in the boat."

"Wasn't one of them killed?" asked Donald. "Charley told me one was killed by the Indians and another got an arrow in the arm."

"Garst was the man who was killed," laughed David. "He simply fell down when the Indians charged and pretended he was dead. I did notice one of the men had an arm in a sling, however. I'll look after him later."

"When they first arrived they wouldn't come near," continued Mr. Temple. "Finally Rollin paddled out toward them alone. That seemed to convince them that we meant business and they rowed into the bay and went ashore on the beach. Rollin paddled close in and made an offer. He promised that the entire affair would be forgotten when we reached Boston and that there would be no prosecution or even mention of mutiny. He said, however, that we must insist upon their giving up their weapons and that they must bring Volberg aboard securely tied, and that the mate must be kept in chains until we reach Boston.

"They kicked on this, said they were placing themselves entirely in our power and that they had no assurance that we would keep our word. They seemed to think that we were merely trying to get their services to work the ship home, and that then we would turn them over. Rollin argued, even told his reason for making the offer, how they had been deceived, but they were not convinced. Then he threatened to abandon them there as soon as you returned and pointed out that we had enough

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men, with the two prisoners we held in the forecastle, to navigate the ship.

"That seemed to turn the trick, except with Volberg. He protested and they wrangled over it for a while. Evidently the sailors were for accepting our proposition while the mate, naturally, was against it. They finally came to blows, the seamen knocked Volberg down and bound him, and he's now a prisoner in the forecastle. We have a crew again, and in the morning we start for home. Well, see that!"

At Mr. Temple's exclamation every one turned to look at Donald Whitney. He sat slouched far down in his chair, his chin on his chest, his eyes closed. He was fast asleep.

"All in!" exclaimed Rollin. "Here, David. Help me get him to bed."

"He hasn't slept for two days and two nights and he has paddled continuously nearly all that time," explained Georgia.

Rollin's efforts to lift Donald wakened him and he looked up sheepishly.

"It's the heat of this room after being out in the cold," he explained as he arose.

But he did not resist as Rollin led him away and in another moment he was asleep in a berth.

"If ever there was luck it was when that man appeared in Chesterfield Inlet," said Rollin as he came out and shut the stateroom door. "Where would we have been if it hadn't been for him?"

"You must be tired, too, Georgia," interrupted David.

"Not a bit!" cried the girl. "I slept in the canoe nearly all last night and did nothing except lie there and rest today. But I am hungry, hungry for some real food. That meat the Indians gave me was only half-cooked, and the other half was hair."

Rollin went to the galley to find the cook back on the job and preparing a huge meal for the crew who also, according to galley reports, were heartily sick of a straight diet of meat without salt.

A little later dinner was served in the main cabin. Rollin ate hurriedly and then went on deck to maintain the watch while Garst was having his dinner. As soon as the seaman was seated he began urging that Volberg be removed to the after part of the ship and that he be given a bunk somewhere except in the forecastle.

"I tell you, sir," he said, addressing Mr. Temple, "you're being too easy with those men and they'll get your ship and you yet. They've mutinied, and they know it, and no one understands better than a sailor what that means. Volberg hasn't any way of knowing you'll keep your word and he is in chains. You've got the strangle hold on him and he knows it. And he's dangerous."

"Garst is right!" added David. "We would be foolish to take any sort of chances with these men, even if they are not armed. They outnumber us two to one and a surprise would end us. We have a chance for safety now and we would be committing suicide if we didn't make the most of it."

"Maybe you're right," conceded Mr. Temple, "but I can't believe these men will add murder to their crimes and make their punishment certain. But where are you going to put every one?"

"There is a couch in Captain Hewitt's room which I can use," said David. "Mr. Whitney can take my bunk in Rollin's room, and that leaves the remaining room for Garst and Volberg."

"That suits me, sir," said the seaman. "I don't want you to think I'm getting chesty because I'm to command the ship, sir, so far as sailing goes, and want to have a mate's berth with all the trimmings. But I don't want to see Volberg and his men get hold of things again because it means the end of us all.

"And here's another thing, sir. I've got to sleep sometimes, and I'll pick out the best man forward to navigate the ship while I'm below. But every minute of the night and day one of you four must be on deck with a rifle and revolver."

AT DAYLIGHT the next morning Garst had all hands on deck and, with the aid of the motor, got up the anchors and worked out of the small bay into which he and Donald had run the *Anywhere* the night of the storm.

Donald did not appear until the middle of the forenoon. He opened his stateroom door to find Georgia alone in the cabin. Instantly the remaining drowsiness vanished and he started around the table toward her.

"Wait!" she cried, rising and backing away. "Sit down a moment, please."

Donald, mystified, startled, stood still, while Georgia returned to her seat.

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"Listen," she said. "You don't know how much father and I appreciate what you have done for us. We can never begin even to tell you how we feel. And I must add one more task to the multitude you have already performed."

She stopped and looked down at the table, upon which her hands were gripped until the knuckles showed white. Her face gave further evidence of the strain under which she labored. Donald, in complete bewilderment, could only stare.

"It's this," continued Georgia at last. "I want you to forget everything that happened from the time we left the Indian camp until we reached the ship. I don't want you ever to refer to it."

Donald only continued to stare.

"It's my fault," she continued rapidly. "I should never have permitted it. It was the situation, the excitement, the romance of the whole affair, that carried me away. It isn't that I don't like you, Donald. I do, but not that way. And, besides, I owe everything to David Baird. He—expects to marry me, and some day he will."

"But Georgia! That's not true! You know it isn't! You don't know yourself, you don't understand. What happened to us out there, girl, happens only once to people. And it happens only because of one big thing."

"No, no! Not here! Perhaps you are right under ordinary circumstances. But up here it is so different. I realize our mistake now. When you get back to civilization you'll see what I mean. We haven't been living in a real world."

"But—" Donald began.

"Please don't," interrupted Georgia. "You don't know what David means to me, what he has done for me, what he has sacrificed, how patient and loyal he has been. But I know and I—I love him."

CHAPTER XVI

ROLLIN'S LAST SHOT

BEFORE Donald could reply Mr. Temple and David descended to the cabin from the deck.

"We're off the site of the village now," Mr. Temple began at once, "and I insist that we must go ashore and take photographs and measurements of the ruins of those buildings, as well as draw a map of the coast with the location of the village fixed. We can't go back without that, or who would believe that we ever found the place?"

"Why don't you do it?" asked Georgia. "There certainly is time."

"David and Garst don't want to split up the party and give the crew another chance," explained the father. "They say that some of the crew must go ashore and one or more of us, and that we will weaken ourselves, either on shore or on the ship, so that we will be right back where we were before."

"It would be sheer folly!" announced David emphatically. "If your father goes ashore with two or three of the crew to row the boat, what is to prevent their overpowering him and holding him as a hostage to compel the rest of us to surrender? And surrender, with those men, means only one thing. You must remember that our deaths assure them of safety."

"Why not let me do it?" suggested Donald. "I can paddle ashore in a canoe alone. You'll have all the crew here and there are enough of you to stand guard. If Mr. Temple wishes to go, he can do so easily."

David could not find any objection to this and Mr. Temple was enthusiastic over the prospect of again visiting the site of Snorri Gellison's village. In fifteen minutes, armed with camera, sketching materials and a steel tape, they were shoreward bound, Donald paddling and Mr. Temple sitting on the floor of the canoe.

"Whitney certainly has jumped into every breach that we have found," said David as he and Georgia stood at the rail and watched the canoe. "Your father would have been broken-hearted if he had had to leave Chesterfield Inlet without another day among those ruins."

"That is what he came for, of course," answered Georgia. "That and the white Indians and—and Rollin."

"And if he never found the village he would be happy."

"You mean that Rollin is going to be different?"

"He is different. You'll see the change in him. From the moment Garst told us that his wild tales in Boston, when he first met Volberg, were responsible for all the trouble we have had here in the inlet, Rollin has changed completely. It is the

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first time he has ever brought danger to others. He hasn't said anything. He just seemed to grow up. He has accepted so far as he could the responsibility of righting it all. And his sense of justice was not warped by a desire for the easiest way out. It was Rollin who insisted that we must give the crew a chance, and it was he who went out to make terms with them there on the beach."

"Then everything has come out as we hoped, hasn't it, David?"

"Everything?"

The question came involuntarily.

"Everything, as each of us hoped."

He drew back and faced her.

"Are you sure?" he asked incredulously.

"I am sure, David."

"Georgia!" he cried as he took a step toward her. "I can't believe it! I've waited so long! And I thought——"

"I know what you thought," interrupted the girl gently. "But you were wrong. Only, David, can you wait just a little longer? When we are home things will seem natural again. Here I can't make you see what I mean. Everything is different."

"Wait! I can wait forever. Only, Georgia, you must be sure. Think what it means. You are young. I am older, and, somehow, I'm growing older every day."

"You're not, David, and I will be sure. I think I'm sure now. Only I want to have my feet on shore again, back in Chicago."

Donald and Mr. Whitney did not return until sunset. The wind had freshened and Garst was impatient to get away.

"I want to be near that windward shore," he declared as he watched the sky. "These waters aren't charted, and they're too narrow, and there are too many islands, for us to go cruising about in the dark."

As soon as the canoe was aboard, the anchors were up and the *Anywhere* was headed back toward the spot she had left in the morning.

"It's going to blow hard out of the northwest," explained the skipper when the others remonstrated, "and I'm playing safe."

It did blow, all night and the next day and for two days more. Snow fell thickly most of the time and, with the exception of the man on guard, the Temple party kept to the cabin. The films exposed at the site of the village were developed, the plan of the village drawn accurately to scale, and always there were reminiscences of the previous week.

With Georgia safe and the ship ready for the voyage home, Mr. Temple's enthusiasm for the original object of the expedition returned. Happy as he was over the outcome of their dangerous experience, he could not hide his disappointment that he had not seen the white Indians. Donald, realizing for the first time what the discovery of them would have meant to the older man, offered freely all the information he had gained and even suggested that Mr. Temple use it in any report he would make on the expedition.

"I went after it more for the fun of the thing than for any other reason," he explained, "and I can see now that I didn't have a sufficient groundwork for a really valuable investigation. I'd really be glad, Mr. Temple, to have you take all my information and do what you can with it. No one else, you know, will ever have an opportunity to investigate those people again."

"It's really a tragedy, what you have done to them," said Rollin. "For a thousand years they have waited for this goddess to come and lead them away, and then they have a trick like this played upon them! They'll never be able to understand."

But even as they discussed the ethnic history of the white Indians they never for a moment relaxed their vigilance. Donald, Rollin, David, Mr. Temple and Garst took their turns of four hours each pacing the after-deck, armed with rifle and revolver. In the cabin weapons were always ready, for it had been determined that no chances were to be taken. Volberg had been moved into the stateroom occupied by Garst. This was forward, down a passageway from the main cabin, and he could not hear the conversation around the table.

THE crew went about their duties as if nothing had happened. The last day of the storm Garst decided that he could run out of the bay that formed the head of the inlet and that night found shelter fifty miles farther east.

The next day was fair but with little wind, and when the anchor was dropped at night there still remained a hundred

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miles of inlet ahead of them and the prospect of another storm the next day.

At dinner, when the entire party was gathered with the exception of Garst, Donald asked if any of them really believed that there was further danger from the crew.

"It's simply a matter of not taking chances," murmured David. "I'm beginning to believe that there is no reason to expect further trouble."

"Then I'm not really needed to help guard this end of the ship?" asked Donald.

"Not needed!" the others chorused. "No, but what do you intend to do?"

"If you people think you can get safely through, I'd like to have you drop me at the mouth of the inlet," was the quiet reply.

For a moment no one spoke. They simply stared at Donald in complete bewilderment.

"Of course," he hastened to explain, "I won't want to do it if you really think I'm needed. But if the crew behaves, or you think you can handle them if they don't, I'd like to be dropped off when we reach the bay."

"I won't listen to such a thing!" exclaimed Mr. Temple. "Leave you here in this country with Winter coming on! Man, are you crazy?"

"You would perish," added Rollin.

Neither David nor Georgia spoke. The girl sat staring at Donald, while Dr. Baird looked at the table before him.

"I didn't intend to start anything like this," Donald explained contritely, "but you seem to forget that if you people hadn't showed up with this ship I would have had to get out anyhow."

"But we are here, and we have a ship, and you will be home by Christmas," said Rollin.

"I'm afraid I haven't much of a home, except a couple of rooms in a club in Chicago, and, besides, I promised to spend Christmas with a friend up here."

"My dear boy," said Mr. Temple, "are you trying to joke with us?"

"Not at all. You see, when I started North I wrote this friend, a Hudson's Bay Company post manager with whom I spent the Winter two years ago, that I'd drop in on him for Christmas. He was transferred this Summer to Fort Churchill, and it was my plan, after finding this band of Indians, to go on down the coast of Hudson's Bay to Churchill. There's good polar-bear shooting around there in Winter, and MacNeil is a corking fine fellow, and he'll be mighty lonesome. I can get out late in the Winter or wait until Summer."

"But how far is it down the coast?" asked Rollin.

"Only five hundred miles. I'll have to ask you folks for enough grub to see me through, and some coal and a little of that pitch pine you have."

"You're mad!" cried Mr. Temple.

"Not at all," answered Donald. "It's only what I would have had to do anyhow, and the trip has been made before."

His matter-of-fact manner made further objections seem useless. Neither Rollin nor his father was convinced. They were simply at a loss as to how to proceed to persuade their guest to give up this mad undertaking. As always in any social position which was beyond him, Mr. Temple turned to Georgia. But she had disappeared, had slipped away during the argument. David, his face pale, his eyes staring at the table, sat as if unconscious of what was going on.

Donald immediately availed himself of the sudden silence by rising and ending the discussion.

"We'll reach the mouth of the inlet tomorrow," he said as he left the cabin, "and I want to be ready to start."

As Garst had predicted, another storm came up in the night and they wakened to find snow driving before a strong northwest wind. The inlet was wider and more open and the wind straight down it toward the sea. Garst had the *Anywhere* under way early and she drove before the gale, her decks covered with snow.

It was miserable weather. Mr. Temple grumbled when he arose to take his watch on deck from four o'clock until eight, and Rollin, whom he relieved, offered to stand it in his place.

"No, I'll do it," answered his father, "but how could they do anything in this sort of weather?"

At eight o'clock Donald went on deck for his four-hour shift. He did not mind the weather as he was accustomed to Summer snowstorms. When he was relieved by David at noon he turned to Garst, who stood behind the companionway.

"How are you going to give me a chance to get to shore in this?" he asked.

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"I figure that if we keep on at this rate we can bring up under the lee of Fairway Island at about four o'clock," was the answer.

"That will be all right. I can wait there until the wind goes down and then get across to the mainland easily. I'll get ready now."

He went below, leaving David on guard and Garst still anxiously watching the ship and the weather. If anything, the wind increased in violence and the snow drove ahead of it in thicker clouds. David, as he paced the after-deck, bundled in warm clothing, saw that the back of the man at the wheel was covered thickly and wondered if his own coat were as heavily powdered. Little drifts formed against the bulwarks and spray left a coating of ice along the rail and in the shrouds.

The *Anywhere* was driving ahead under nearly bare poles. There was not sufficient open water behind them to permit the sea to reach tempestuous proportions, but the snow and spray made the deck a most uncomfortable place.

As the afternoon wore on Garst became more and more restless. Every five minutes he walked across to have a look at the compass. Once he wheeled, caught the direction of the wind and then barked out at the man at the wheel—

"Keep your course!"

"She's right where she was, sir!"

Garst looked again at the compass and then dashed into the cabin.

"What's the matter?" asked David.

"It's the responsibility, I guess, sir," was the answer. "He never was in command before, and no matter how long a man has been before the mast, he's nervous at first when he's doing the navigating."

"We ought to be nearly out of the inlet into the open bay, hadn't we?"

"Very nearly, sir, if we don't hit one point or the other getting out in this smother."

DAVID looked ahead but could not see more than one hundred yards in front of the ship. Forward, leaning against the forecastle hatchway, their backs to him and to the storm, were two sailors. He stopped just forward of the wheel and watched. Did the safety of the ship depend upon the nervous, inexperienced Garst and the lookout those two were keeping?

He was about to turn, to speak again, when the wheelman, after one quick glance, suddenly released his grip on the wheel with his right hand and shot it across and up. The fist caught David squarely under the side of the jaw and he collapsed on to the deck, his rifle beneath him.

Instantly the forecastle hatchway was thrown back and Volberg, followed by the rest of the crew, sprang out upon the deck and raced aft. The wheelman, letting the ship take care of herself, was upon his victim instantly. A moment later he arose with the rifle, leaving David lying where he had fallen.

As he waved the weapon triumphantly to the swiftly advancing crew he turned toward the companionway leading into the main cabin, took one step and fell into a crumpled heap on the deck.

Volberg, in the van of his desperate, unarmed crew, lunged forward to recover the rifle, which had gone clattering to the deck. But before he could reach the body of the fallen sailor, Rollin, pumping another shell into his rifle, sprang out of the companionway, followed by Garst.

The mate was too close for Rollin to lift his weapon to his shoulder and, holding it at his waist, he pulled the trigger.

Volberg threw up his arms and shot forward. The force of his rush along the deck hurled his body upon Rollin, and they went down together.

Garst had jumped to one side, and he alone met the crew as they rushed up from the main deck. His automatic fairly sputtered as he swung it back and forth in the faces of the seamen. One dropped in a heap. Another clutched at his arm. The others stopped, hesitated, then turned to run.

Just as they did so the *Anywhere*, which had veered off and was rushing about unguided, came to a sudden, shuddering stop.

The havoc of the impact was instantaneous throughout the ship. Masts snapped and came crashing to the deck. Timbers creaked and groaned and parted. Every one was thrown flat upon the deck or cabin floor. Before they could rise the vessel suddenly heaved upward, then forward, turned on to one side and settled into a solid, immovable position.

Garst, who had been thrown against the companionway, fell unconscious. With the tilting of the ship his body slid down

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the inclined deck, the bodies of Volberg and the seaman Rollin had killed on top of him.

Rollin, because he had been down when the shock came, was uninjured. He jumped to his feet and pulled his revolver, but the crew were in full retreat in the waist of the ship.

"What's up?" shouted Donald as he scrambled through the tilted companionway, followed by Mr. Temple and Georgia.

"The crew rushed us and then the ship struck," answered Rollin, his eyes still upon the men forward. "Look after David there. I don't know what happened to him."

David answered to his own name by lifting his head and looking around in a dazed fashion. Donald sprang to help him to his feet when Rollin shouted:

"Quick! The crew is taking to the boat! Cover them with your rifle, Whitney. You know how to shoot. We mustn't let them desert us on a wrecked ship."

Donald ran forward, shouting to the crew to return to the deck. They had already swung one of the boats out on the davits and half of them were inside holding to the tackle.

"Get back!" shouted Donald as he threw up his rifle.

The seamen still on deck only scrambled in over the side, and Donald, to frighten them, fired over their heads. Instantly one end of the loaded boat shot down into the smother of foam beneath, spilling out men, casks and cases of goods. A head or two showed in the surf and was swept away. Five seconds after the report of the rifle not a seaman was to be seen, while the boat, one end still attached to the forward davit, pounded against the ship's side.

"Did you see what I did?" cried Donald as, trembling and pale, he returned to the others. "I cut a line with that shot and dumped the whole bunch overboard."

"No you didn't," replied Rollin so calmly that every one turned toward him instantly. "I fired that shot, before I left Boston last April. And I'll never fire another."

He turned and slid down the deck to look over the rail where the seamen had disappeared. David, mistaking his actions and his words, was after him in an instant.

"No need of that," said Rollin when his friend gripped him. "I didn't mean what you are thinking. I'm responsible, but I don't take it that way. I've been talking with Garst a lot and he says they were a bad lot and we could have expected trouble of some sort anyhow. He's been in the forecastle with them for five months and he knows them, and he says, from things they've let drop, that there was trouble on the *Polar Bear* on their last cruise.

"I know that sounds cold and that it doesn't absolve me. But it's done, and I'm not going to let it spoil my life. It's going to make my life, David. I'm going back and be of more use in this world than the lot of them ever could have been."

"But what are we going to do now?" he demanded with sudden energy. "That's the first question. The ship isn't going to hang on here long in this gale. Where's Garst? He's the only one who knows what to do."

CHAPTER XVII

THE FINAL SACRIFICE

FOR a moment it was believed that Garst had gone overboard when the *Anywhere* struck and then a muffled voice was heard—

"Get off of me, you scum!"

The bodies of Volberg and the seaman were lifted and the broad back of the sailor was shoved up between them. He sprung to his feet at once, wild-eyed and ready to continue the fight.

"Where are they?" he demanded when he saw the deck was empty of all except the group clinging to the wheel and rail above him.

"Overboard, the whole crew," replied Rollin. "Come up here, Garst, and tell us what's going to happen to the ship. Will she break to pieces or can we stick here until the storm dies out?"

Garst scrambled up beside them and rubbed his body where it had struck the companionway and he had been knocked out.

"Just as I said," he began angrily. "I knew you couldn't trust those men. They had that planned before they ever tied up Volberg there on the beach. They waited until they knew we wouldn't expect any such thing and then they jumped us."

"But the ship," insisted Rollin. "Will she stick here or go to pieces?"

Garst looked about him, watched the seas for a moment, tried to see through

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the snow across the boiling mass of water to windward, and then turned unconcernedly to the anxious group.

"She'll stick here until the ice takes her off this Winter," he announced calmly. "We're inside a shoal, which breaks the force of the seas, and we're hard and fast on top of a ledge that has gripped the bottom of her like a vice."

"Then we can't get her off?" asked Mr. Temple.

"Be thankful you can't, sir. If there were any chance of that she wouldn't stick now, and the lot of us would be turning somersaults in that out there," and he waved at the seas fighting among the ledges to leeward.

"What are we to do then?" demanded Mr. Temple.

"Go below where it's warm and talk it over, I'd say. The ship is safe enough here, for you can't feel a tremble in her, and we're safe as long as she is."

The cabin was most comfortable, after the wind and snow on deck, but chairs were impossible on the sharply sloping floor and the party had difficulty in finding seats.

"There's one thing about it," said Garst, "and that is we would have struck anyhow. A compass acts mighty funny in these waters, so close to the magnetic pole. That's why I went below when I did. The course didn't seem the same, for I knew the wind wouldn't change that quick. I went below to look at the chart to see if we had much leeway on the south shore, and one look at it showed me we were in danger. I started for the deck on the run, and I got up just after the lad, there, and in time to face the crew."

Rollin explained that he had heard the sound of David's body striking the deck. It had only been a thud, but a suggestive one, different from the noises of the storm.

"I was just acting on the principle of taking no chances," he said, "and I ran up with my rifle ready, just in time to catch Volberg. How did he get loose?"

Garst went into the stateroom occupied by himself and the mate and returned in a moment with three files.

"It was just as I said," he declared again. "They planned this before they ever came aboard, and they did it quick, before there was a chance of our getting out into the bay and meeting a whaler or Hudson's Bay Company ship."

"Of course they had it planned," said Donald. "When that boat spilled out the crew it dumped several cases and casks. They must have loaded it last night should anything go wrong with their plan.

"And if it hadn't been for Rollin we wouldn't even be here on the wreck. With Volberg and the rest of them pouring down that companionway when we never expected them, they wouldn't have left a hair of us."

"What happened to you, David?" asked Mr. Temple. "You don't seem to be hurt."

"Thanks to the wheelman's knowledge of boxing, I guess," was the answer. "I had been talking to him and turned my back to look away. He landed a clean knockout, and I didn't know anything more until I heard some one speak my name. The whole thing was planned, beyond a doubt."

No one else spoke for a moment. They were recovering from the excitement of the previous few minutes and also from the shock of a realization of what they had escaped. But each knew that the present security was only temporary, that five hundred miles of dangerous coast lay between them and the nearest white man, and that the distance must be navigated in an open boat.

"I guess you'll have to join me on my little jaunt to Churchill," said Donald in an attempt to revive their spirits. "It's really not so bad as you think, and you may be able to make Chicago by Christmas."

"Christmas!" exclaimed Mr. Temple. "How can we do that when we're almost at the Arctic circle, it's the second week of September, and we haven't any ship. It must be thousands of miles of slow travel."

"Not at all. We should be able, with luck, to make Churchill before the ice gets too bad. From there we can get to York Factory by dog team, two hundred miles. MacNeil will do everything possible to get us there. From York Factory it is only two hundred miles to the head of steel on the new Hudson's Bay Railroad. That makes nine hundred miles, five hundred by water, to a train, and another few days will land you in Chicago."

"That's all very well from Churchill on," interrupted Garst, "but I don't want a

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worse coast to travel than we've got before us. Why, man, there's places where it's so shallow when the tide goes out you can't see the water."

"You're a good man, Garst," reported Donald with a slight show of anger, "but your viewpoint is bad. We've got to make that trip, and we're going to. So be cheerful about it."

Donald, to his surprise, found it easy to be cheerful. Though of his own volition he would have left the *Anywhere* that afternoon, he knew now that he would have many additional weeks in the company of Georgia. He had purposely told of his determination to leave the ship. If she would let him go, he had reasoned, it was as she had said, only the excitement of the moment, only the brief spell of romance and the glamor of the primitive that had moved her, not a great love as he had dreamed he had found.

His pride and his determination to receive a love as great as he gave made him unable to try to win Georgia from the man she said she loved. But now that circumstances had arranged differently he could only rejoice that he did not have to fulfil one of the hardest tasks he had ever imposed upon himself.

Georgia, too, now that danger from the crew was past, seemed for the first time in days to drop her air of restraint. Ever since Donald's announcement of his plans she had avoided him. Now she entered almost gaily into the plans for their long journey.

"It will only need this to complete it," she said. "Why, dad, when I threatened to make an ethnologist of you, who would ever have believed you were being dragged into a movie serial? Here we've all been prisoners once, I three times, and I have been rescued by a band of white Indians and turned into a Norse goddess to vanish in a bright light. Now we find ourselves crewless and shipless and facing a journey which last week would have been considered impossible. Only I can't help but think of those men. Doesn't it seem awful that they couldn't trust us?"

"It's not so awful, miss, as if they'd gotten us," answered Garst grimly. "And that they would if it hadn't been for the young fellow, your brother, here."

"I know," said Georgia with a shudder, "and it's all past now. But no one has even thought of Captain Hewitt."

David rushed at once to the stateroom of his patient.

"He was almost standing up, his berth was slanting so," he announced upon his return, "and he had figured out what had happened to the ship. The first thing he asked was, 'How is the tide?' I told him I thought it was at the flood. 'Then we're safe,' he told me. 'There's not a tremor in her.' "

"Will he be able to stand such a trip in an open boat?" asked Mr. Temple.

"I think so," replied David. "Physically he has improved greatly in the last week, and from the way he talked he is far better mentally. We will wrap him up and keep him as dry and warm as possible. And I wouldn't be afraid, before we leave, to tell him all that has happened. He hasn't known of the mutiny."

Talk immediately turned to plans for the journey. Garst, with his seaman's knowledge, and Donald with his experience in the North country, led in the arrangements.

"It will mean three weeks of sailing," began Donald as he looked for paper and pencil. "That means food for twice that long to be safe. And coal, in case we should be driven ashore in a storm. We can't plan on finding fuel for four hundred miles at least."

THE remainder of the afternoon was spent in making lists and revising them, in rearranging and adding so that no necessary thing should be forgotten and nothing which was unnecessary should be added to their burden.

It was evening before this was completed. The men took turns watching from the deck that night. The next morning they wakened to find the storm as severe as ever with no sign of abatement.

The *Anywhere* was as solid as the day before. It seemed, as Garst had said, to be held in a vise. The feeling of security was increased in the forenoon when the snow ceased for a time and Garst was able to make out their position.

"We haven't anything but luck to thank for being here," he reported in the cabin. "We were almost clear of the inlet and would have been safely out in the bay in another half hour. When the wheel was let go she started to come to and then fall off, and she ran in between a bunch of reefs off a little island. With the best man

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in the world at the wheel, and no snow to bother him, it couldn't have been done. But she zigzagged inside the reefs to a place where the big seas couldn't touch her and then piled up."

"Where are we now?" asked Donald.

"Just inside the mouth of the inlet and off the south shore."

"We can get out from among these reefs all right."

"When the gale goes down there'll be a clear passage to the leeward."

Every one was anxious to be off, but the delay was not irritating, as the work of preparation lasted through the day. First the bodies of the two seamen who had been shot were sewed up, weighted and dropped overboard. The boat the crew had attempted to launch had been battered so badly, swinging from the one davit, it was useless, but the other had been securely lashed to the deck and was made ready.

Water was placed in casks, coal packed in bags, provisions sorted over and stowed away under the seats, and a sail rigged. The men were busy all day with this work and to Georgia remained only the smaller things, an emergency package of medicine, her father's plans, drawings and photographs of the village, her own warm clothing and whatever small comforts she could think of and contrive to get into a small space.

But during it all she was the old Georgia, the happy, dictatorial Georgia they had known in Chicago. All noticed the change, although Rollin was the only one to call attention to it.

"Look at her!" he exclaimed as they were sitting together in the cabin. "She actually appears to be happy because we are going to sea in an open boat. I'm afraid that her goddessing with the Indians has made her primitive. Most girls would be frightened to death at the prospect."

"It's not that at all," Georgia answered quickly, glad of an opportunity to explain herself to David Baird's gravely questioning eyes. "It's only that we know the worst that can happen to us. Somehow, I always felt that the crew would give us trouble. Now we know all of our danger, and it is a relief."

"Let me tell you, miss," interrupted Garst forebodingly, "that any one going to sea in an open boat on the east coast of Hndson's Bay don't know the worst that can happen to them."

Donald's scowling glance made him break off suddenly and the preparations went on without any further discussion of the dangers that might be ahead of them. Donald's spirits remained at high pitch. He made no effort to see Georgia alone, but he could not forget that instead of a lonely voyage down the coast he was going to be near her every day, to spend his energies in her behalf.

The second morning it was decided that they could launch the boat safely. Everything was in readiness and the men went below to carry Captain Hewitt to the deck. David had told him of their predicament, but not of their plans. When he saw the boat loaded for a long journey he at once demanded their position and destination.

"We're just at the mouth of Chesterfield Inlet, where we went ashore," answered Rollin. "We're taking to the boat now and hope to reach Fort Churchill, five hundred miles down the coast."

"Churchill!" exclaimed the captain. "Where are your heads?"

"But we've got to get out before Winter comes, and that's the nearest point we can make," replied Rollin.

"The nearest, man! When my old friend Captain Bennett told me he'd Winter at Marble Island and would be there early in September? And Marble Island only fifty miles away! Garst, bring the chart and show me where we are."

The seaman did as he was told, and Rollin held the injured man up so that he could see.

"We're there, are we," asked Captain Hewitt, "on that point, or near it, eh? Look at your scale! Fifty miles at the most, and you'll be at the spot where whalers have been Wintering longer than I can remember. They don't do it much now, for there's few of them to come these days, but Bennett said he'd be there, and another ship with him. Let's get aboard."

Captain Hewitt's announcement could not add to the courage of the little party, for that had been at high pitch during the preparations for the departure. But it robbed the journey of its hardships and dangers, brought a smile to every face, and it was with a cheer and a song that they pulled away from the stranded *Anywhere*, worked out through the shoals to the open sea, hoisted a sail to catch the last of the dying gale, and started the homeward journey.

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They kept the coast in sight, passed just outside of Fairway Island in the forenoon and before dark picked up the glistening white dome of Marble Island by the last rays of the setting sun. Garst caught the course with his compass and two hours after dark they were skirting the shore.

The breeze still held, though it had shifted to the east, and they continued, following Captain Hewitt's directions, until just before midnight a light appeared around a point. A half-hour later they were all in Captain Bennett's cabin drinking hot coffee and telling their story of mutiny and shipwreck to the astonished whalers.

"Luck has certainly been with you," commented Captain Bennett at last. "I am sailing for New Bedford in the morning."

"Sailing for New Bedford! For home! Tomorrow!" cried the members of the Temple party excitedly. "Why, we thought you were going to Winter here."

"I was, but there are two ships from my company here. We had a good catch and, with what the other fellows have, made up a full cargo. So we take it out and they remain."

"And we can go out with you!" they cried in chorus.

"It would be a pleasure to have you aboard, I am sure," answered the captain.

"You say the other ship is to remain," broke in Donald. "It won't go into Winter quarters just yet, surely."

"No, they are planning on a cruise south as far as Fort Churchill before tying up here for the Winter. They start in the morning, too. We just finished transferring cargo this evening."

"If you don't mind, Captain Bennett, I'd like to go on the other ship," continued Donald. "Churchill was my destination, and I promised to spend Christmas there."

"Just as you say," was the reply. "I am sure you will be welcomed by Captain Taylor."

Donald's announcement brought an instant termination to the high spirits of the others.

"I'm sorry, Donald," said Mr. Temple simply. "I'm going to miss you, boy."

The others did not speak. Georgia sat staring at the young man, David at the table before him. Rollin, who had guessed something of Donald's reason, glanced at his sister.

"In that case," said Captain Bennett, "you had better get aboard Captain Taylor's ship tonight. We'll be under way at daylight, and they, too."

Donald jumped to his feet and began shaking hands with Mr. Temple and Rollin. He turned to David, erect, smiling, and grasped the physician's hand heartily.

"Good luck," he whispered.

He bid farewell to Garst, to Captain Hewitt, and then turned to Georgia. Still smiling, he looked at her and held out his hand.

"Good-by, Miss Temple," he said. "I may beat you to Chicago yet."

He turned at once, for the girl's eyes had filled with tears, and his own voice had trembled at the end. He sprang up the stairs to the deck, all the others following except Georgia. She dropped into a chair and buried her face in her arms. David, who had started to follow the others, turned and saw her. For a moment he hesitated, and then with a sudden tightening of his jaws he closed the door and strode back to her side.

"Listen, Georgia," he said gently. "It won't do. I thought I could go through with it. I wanted you so badly. But I can't. You would never be happy, and neither would I. What I have given I have given gladly and there has never been any debt. Even if there were, you can't repay debts by love."

"What do you mean?" asked Georgia as she lifted her head and looked at him.

"I mean that I know something of what love is. It comes only once, the real thing, Georgia. It never came to you until Donald Whitney appeared, and it will never come again, not for me or for any one else."

He turned abruptly and went out of the cabin. Georgia remained motionless, staring before her. In a moment there was a quick step on the stairs and the door burst open, Donald, his eyes eager, questioning, stood before her.

"Doctor Baird said you wished to see me," he announced.

"Donald, he was right!" cried the girl as she arose.

He did not understand the words but he did the gesture, and instantly he was at her side.

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Danger Trail

By ROBERT J. PEARSALL

Author of "The Way of the Strong," "The White Moths of Vizgayan," etc.

UNMISTAKABLY, Private Paxton was a coward. Moreover, he had so far obeyed the command, "Knowthyself," that when certain blunt-speaking men in the little jungle camp at Malecon frankly told him so, he didn't even resent it. Consequently he was told so pretty frequently, until even the edge of his shame was dulled. At first rather vaguely respected, owing to his gentle manners and speech, he soon became the shrinking butt of all rough humor, the legitimate prey of bullies, and apparently an object of despisal to all honest men in his company, save one.

Of course, acknowledging himself to be invertebrate, he quite deserved this, yet in a way it was pitiable. For he was a good enough lad otherwise, no malingerer or shirker. And his forehead was really too imaginative, his chin too undeveloped, his eyes overly introspective for a soldier. His life history had been this: a hothouse of a home, a catastrophic domestic upheaval, a few months' weak struggle in a tooth-and-fang world, and finally the seeming refuge of the Service. Which is perhaps a comfortable enough habitat, but not for a man who seeks it as a refuge.

Just now his cowardice was working full pressure, and with reason. Routed out of his bunk at midnight, and led off through a trackless tangle of underbrush, he didn't know where he was, nor where he was going, nor why, only he was quite sure he was going to his grave. And so all his movements were informed with fear, as were those of his companion with certitude. That fear made him clumsy, increased the noise of their progress, and so increased their peril. Every moment he expected a stinging reminder of this from Sergeant Rothlin, but he received none.

Their course was set toward the Southern Cross, of which every now and then they caught a glimpse through the matted vegetation above their heads. But mostly this matting shut out even the light of the stars; and to Paxton the pitch-darkness was of course a terrible thing, like the mask on the face of an assassin, like a veil hiding every conceivable danger.

But it was like him, too, that when presently the sun blazed up, he knew the darkness had been better. For now they were exposed to the menace that wove itself into the very fabric of the air. At any instant might come the whir of a flung *kampilan*, the crack of a rifle, the whiz of an arrow or deadly poisoned dart. Imaginary death leaped at Paxton with every jungle sound, the crackling of a twig, the call of a gecko, the stir of an unseen animal. His fatigue still further weakened his nerves, and his stumbling walk became a shamble.

Sergeant Rothlin didn't seem to notice this. He pressed on unhesitatingly, assuredly. After a while he paused, and, without a word, signed to Paxton to take his turn at the hard labor of breaking the trail.

Paxton obeyed. The look he got from the sergeant as he passed astonished him a little. In it was neither pity nor contempt

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nor doubt; it was a look of free and trustful camaraderie, such as —what a mad thought —one brave man might give another in the face of hardship and danger, equally shared.

But for some reason Paxton found himself squirming with more steadiness than he had expected through the stinging creepers and brambly brake with which Nature guards her secret places in southern Luzon. Actual hazard was added by morasses, quagmires, deep and sullen pools of black water, with bottoms of soft, downward-sucking mud. And now Paxton almost stumbled into a wide crevasse, which the dense, concealing underbrush turned into a trap.

It was a very deep crevasse, too. It was as though the surface of the earth, cooling, had cracked wide open. Paxton thought of recent earthquakes; and he saw how perpendicularly its sides dipped down, as though they would never meet. But he saw, too, that the stout shrubbery which overhung it might with care be used as a bridge. Something quite outside himself, it seemed, forced him to make the attempt. Midway he took to trembling as though he thought he would slip through the supporting branches. Sergeant Rothlin must have observed this. But when they had both crossed, Rothlin said heartily:

"Good work, Paxton. Now if I'd been alone, I don't believe I'd ever have thought of that."

The boy scented ridicule, but there was none in the sergeant's tone.

In about an hour they came out of the jungle into a forest of *tuba*-bearing bamboos, from tuft to tuft of which, high over their heads, ran the slender, yielding bridges of the *tuba* men. This forest was, however, like a fringe, shading off presently into a level, treeless plateau, lava-clinkered.

Paxton's immediate fears were somewhat allayed, for the underbrush had been to him like a lair of watching eyes; but in the same measure his bodily discomfort increased. The red ball of fire that had been the sun had turned into a white and scorching flame, the night wind had died away, the pitiless tropical day advanced. And they had been hiking for six hours. Paxton's leg-muscles ached, his feet were sore, his eyes burned, the strap of his haversack galled his shoulder, the weight of his rifle and revolver and sweat-soaked clothing bore him down. His body grew weak and flaccid, but just as it seemed he must protest. . . .

"Hi, there!" called Sergeant Rothlin. "Time for breakfast, ain't it? The shade of this rock's a good place, eh?"

He drew a long breath of satisfaction as he flung himself on the ground.

"You fellows with young legs!" he sighed, opening a can of corned beef. "Well, I got no kick coming, I was young once myself. I suppose you're beginning to wonder the reason for this little stroll, Paxton."

"It's about time, isn't it?" said Paxton, surlily.

But there was no decrease of friendliness in the sergeant's tone.

"It sure is. There ain't many that wouldn't have bothered with questions, all along. I'd have told you before we started, only there wasn't time. True, the captain did say something about waiting and calling for volunteers. But, Lord, you'd have volunteered anyway, and I'd have picked you, so what was the use."

"Picked me!"

Now this *was* derision. There was weak anger in Paxton's voice. But Rothlin smiled confidently.

"Sure. Why not? You're too modest, Paxton. You can hike and shoot with the best of them; you're young, and you ain't poisoned yourself with *vino*. You'll stand up, that's what I told the captain. And when I tell you we're ordered to bring in Black Hachey, you'll know why I didn't want any weak sister along."

"Black Hachey!" The boy's eyes dilated.

"That's it," went on Rothlin, easily. "You've heard of him, the negro renegade from Stotzenberg. He's got to be caught—turned into a fiend, from all account. Massacred a planter and his family at Taybas last week, he and his followers. He's set himself up as a sort of little god, and you know what the gugus are for superstition. And a big detachment wouldn't work; he'd get wind of it and shy off. So we're the lucky ones."

LUCKY! The piece of hardtack Paxton had been munching dropped from his nerveless hand. A chill of fear crept over him, and his face grew white as paper.

"But how do we know where he is?" he faltered.

"That's why we're here; we do know.

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The captain's *muchacho* is at one end of a sort of grapevine telegraph of friendly natives, it seems, and he got the news last night. Black Hachey's at Pansanjan, almost alone, they say. Pansanjan's supposed to be pacified, but it won't be if he stays there long. Two days' hard hiking ought to bring us to the river, then it's down-stream a little. A native can do it in two and a half, and a white man ought to clip a gugu's time a little, eh?"

"I suppose so," agreed Paxton tonelessly. "But why——"

He checked the question. It concerned his selection for the task, and of a sudden he realized he did not want to hear again the sergeant's detestable words of praise. They were of a piece with Sergeant Rothlin's conduct in the barracks, where, of all men there, he alone had failed to recognize by word or sign Paxton's proven lack of courage. And they tortured the boy, just why he did not know.

So Paxton kept silent, and presently fell the prey to whirling visions of terror. Even in the semi-security of Malecon, tales of the cold ferocity of the negro renegade had set him shivering. Now he was out to meet him, and his imagination was flooded with horrid pictures. A black and monstrous figure he saw dominating monkey-minded natives, guiding them to deeds of incredible cruelty, and himself the victim. His appetite quite gone, he repacked his haversack with trembling fingers, and sat debating the chance of an escape from Sergeant Rothlin, and incontinent flight barrackward.

He wondered why he didn't try it. But when Sergeant Rothlin stirred and remarked prosaically—

"Pretty tough to start again, but of course——"

Paxton took up his rifle. Though the initiative was Rothlin's, they got to their feet at the same moment. And Paxton, still quivering all over, set his feet again to the trail.

It was a very desolate country through which they marched that day, a country of scoriac rocks, bare of vegetation and ruinous. The foot-hills of the Cotobato Mountains rose black and forbidding on the southern horizon; but the landscape between was nothing but a level and superheated waste, filled with the oppressive sense of an uninhabited world. The feeling that they were passing quite out of the world lay upon Paxton's soul like a nightmare.

So it was that he peopled the harsh bulks of rock ahead with fantastic and unearthly dangers, through which Black Hachey moved as supreme demon. And it exasperated him that Rothlin was forever recalling him from those imaginings by some perfectly commonplace remark, such as those concerning the hardships of the way.

And yet those hardships were by no means commonplace. If he had been alone, Paxton knew he never could have endured them. But he realized by his companion's whitening face, by his falling, lurching stride, by the blood that soaked through the side of one shoe, that Rothlin was really suffering more than he. Rothlin had, as he frequently admitted, the handicap of age and weight. So an unaccustomed spirit of emulation grew in Paxton, and he plodded doggedly on, discovering reserves of strength that astonished himself.

For the first time in his life, perhaps, he set his spirit in triumphant battle against his flesh; and no man may do that without some vital change. It was no strange thing that toward nightfall, though he was staggering with fatigue like a drunken man, through the bloodshot films that curtained his eyes something had begun to peep that looked like power. And neither was it strange that, before he fell asleep that night in their lonely camp in the foot-hills, a certain other startling thought came to him.

An astounding and strangely soul-warming thought. It was this: he had discovered reserves of strength, might he not also discover reserves of courage? Sergeant Rothlin had been right about the one, what if he were also right about the other? For now Paxton felt he could argue no longer that Rothlin's expressed belief in him was insincere. Upon that belief Rothlin had wagered too heavily, for it might well chance that, in the adventure ahead of them, either's life might hang upon the act of the other.

Black and menacing the hills closed about them, filled with rustlings, creakings, stirrings of unseen things, indefinable sounds that might easily be translated into the sounds of creeping death. But something had for the moment closed Paxton's mind

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to the easy entrance of fear. Quite calmly, but with a queer glow at his heart, he raised himself on his elbow and stole a long look at the one man who had trusted him; then he lay down and slept well.

WHO scoffs at idealism has never watched the power of a transforming thought. Men live by their ideals; whether high or low, they are the only food of the soul. Paxton's had long been fed a poisonous and stunting diet. But this new concept of himself, transitory though it was to prove, so stiffened his carriage as they set out again next morning that in Rothlin's eyes appeared a strange satisfied light, the look of a man who sees a purpose at least partially achieved.

In that day's hike they must cross the mountains. The way was naturally full of problems concerning detours that should be made, impracticable elevations that must be avoided, defiles and gorges that might easily turn into blind passages. In the discussions that arose, Paxton found himself with some surprise bearing quite an equal part.

"Man to man," Rothlin once dropped the phrase, and the sound was good.

It was very hard going, through an apparently primordial world. Broken fragments of lava bruised their feet, harsh and desolate mountains rose behind them; and by the heat that presently began to envelop them it seemed the fires that had upflung those ragged rocks were not yet extinct. Yesterday's reasons for fatigue and fear were quite eclipsed, yet today Paxton bore himself gallantly. Some strange mental alchemy seemed to have entirely dissolved his fears; quite around the corner of time had retreated the perils of ambuscade and of the final encounter with the negro renegade; and had Paxton been asked then he would have said it was rather easy to be brave.

But toward noon he was to be disillusioned by his first actual brush with death.

At the time they were following a narrow defile that wound back into the heart of the mountains. A perpendicular cliff overhung that defile on one side; on the other the ground sloped steeply upward, studded here and there with rocks and clumps of starved shrubbery. Paxton was leading; suddenly he heard, close by, the unmistakable slithering sound of a bolo ripped from its wooden sheath.

His eyes came up in time to catch the bolo swing, a whirling circle of light flashing out from behind a rock a rifle's length ahead.

Garrison training at Malecon had provided against just such an attack. Prone, prone, rifle flung forward to the aim, finger instant to the trigger. But against the results of brainless panic no training can provide; Paxton reeled backward, turned in suicidal flight, and would have been cut down running had he not tripped on a shelving rock and sprawled to the ground. He lay there quaking, and of what followed was only a spectator.

The drag of the swinging bolo had pulled the native's ape-like body forward. Paxton heard the crack of a rifle, saw a red spot pop out upon the exposed brown shoulder. Another bullet caught the native as he fell, but two more followed him from behind the rock. And they came fighting.

The bolo of the first swished down upon Paxton. He closed his eyes and waited for the touch of the cutting edge. He heard a clash of steel against steel; he looked up again to see the muzzle of Rothlin's rifle whirl the bolo sideways. In the same movement, open and shut snapped Rothlin's rifle bolt; swiftly aimed, the rifle spoke again, and the second native fell backward with a yell.

The bolo of the third clipped neatly the shoulder of Sergeant Rothlin's shirt. It would have cleft him from crown to chin had not the recoil of his rifle caught his body off balance and knocked it aside. Rothlin gripped the native's arm, but he jerked away, and, discretion coming upon him, leaped sideways behind a rock. The sergeant pursued him a little way; but the native darted from rock to sheltering rock, dove into a clump of dense shrubbery, and was gone.

Then Rothlin came back to Paxton, who was standing with a hanging head, and with cheeks that had passed from the gray of death-fear to the flush of shame. And Paxton could not look at the man who had saved his life.

"I—I wasn't—" he began miserably.

Rothlin looked none too happy. The chill of disappointment was on him. But he allowed none of it to get into his voice as he interrupted Paxton sharply.

"Fine!" he praised. "Good work."

"But it wasn't——"

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"Team work, that's what it was," broke in Rothlin. "There's not many would have seen as quick as you did that; you hadn't either room or time to shoot. And not many would have dropped as quick and given me a chance to get to work. That's keeping your head, I call it."

With an air of closing the discussion, Rothlin bent over the nearer of the fallen natives.

"He's done for, and the other, too. But the one that got away—pity about that. No surprise party for Black Hachey this trip, I'm afraid. But if that gugu has friends near by, there's liable to be one for us before we reach Pansanjan."

A minute later they had started on again. Rothlin still led, still seemingly oblivious to any change in his companion. But quite in the old fashion was Paxton's head now bowed; he walked shamblingly, with a look of pure dejection on his face and agony in his eyes.

Presently his shoulders began to shake with a sound of sobbing. But Rothlin never turned his head.

Paxton looked as though he had lost a priceless treasure, and indeed he had—how priceless he did not know until he had lost it. Under the acid touch of truth his new-found mental concept of himself had dissolved. The fiction of his manhood had been stripped from him like a stolen cloak, and he stood naked to the shame of his own soul.

And he felt that shame now. He had always felt it in a way; but now the memory of his spineless conduct walked with him like a mocking specter. He had had his hour of self-respect, moments indeed in which he had imagined himself on the heights of valor; and for that hour and those moments, his descent into the old abasement was like a descent into hell.

So he saw himself again as he was, but now with utter loathing; and that was the change in him at the end of the second day. And that self-loathing was still on him when they made their guarded camp that night on the bank of the Pansanjan River; still with him when they made their comradely toss for first watch; and when, Sergeant Rothlin winning, Paxton curled down in the underbrush that lined the river bank for four hours' sleep. Shame, biting, blistering, cleansing Shame was his bedfellow.

It kept him awake a long time, it followed him into the land of troubled dreams. And it was still with him when, with a horrible start controlled before it reached his muscles, he wakened to the knowledge of guttural cries, and a mass of struggling bodies where Sergeant Rothlin had sat on watch.

Instantly he knew what had happened. The man who escaped had carried the news, a band of natives had found their trail; they had crept upon Sergeant Rothlin, more exposed than he, and overwhelmed him in a rush. And instantly he saw, too, that there was no chance even for an effective trigger pull, for the shifting forms were indistinguishable in the semi-darkness, and besides, they were twenty to one.

Almost instantly, quick as his brain could formulate the plan for safety, Paxton was slipping down the river-bank. His rifle and revolver he carried part way; then dropped them with his ammunition belt where the shrubbery was thickest. He reached the water, which lay at that point in a deep, quiet pool, and crept in, shivering. Somewhere on the way he had picked up a slender reed, a piece of the hollow bamboo.

He listened for a moment before submerging himself completely. The struggle above had creased; he heard a coarse African voice demand of Sergeant Rothlin the whereabouts of his companion. He waited in suspense for Rothlin's answer. It was a lie, a noble one. Paxton heard himself declared dead, killed in the first fight—else, demanded Sergeant Rothlin, why would he have lain where he had fallen?

Paxton recalled that the native who had got away had never seen him rise. They might be convinced.

They were not at first. They were too sure they had followed a double trail. They beat the underbrush and the grass, they searched up and down the river-bank, they even swept the water itself with investigative eyes. But whenever they came near, nothing broke the surface of that water but the very tip of the bamboo tube through which Paxton breathed, imperceptible in the darkness.

Finally they gave up. They led Rothlin off toward the *barrio* of Pansanjan, gibbering among themselves as to the holiday they would make of his death. It was not until their voices had almost died away

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that Paxton came out of the water, shivering, shaking like a man in an ague, and not altogether with physical cold. For he knew now what he had to attempt, if he were to live with himself, and the knowledge palsied him with fear.

AGAIN a forest of bamboos, the tufts of great leaves at their tops flap-flapping in the night wind, their tall, straight trunks swaying lazily. Quite close to Pansanjan this forest must be, for here is a tree notched for the easy ascent of the *tuba* men, and here another; and from tree-top to tree-top, an intricate network against the sky, run slender bridges of bamboo poles. Across these bridges in the daytime flit the gatherers of bamboo sap—foundation for the sweet, insidious beverage called *tuba*—but they are empty now, like a spider's web in the moonlight.

Or are they empty?

Under the bamboos a camp asleep, save for one sentry that sits bolt upright by the side of a prisoner, bound hand and foot with *bejuco*. A camp grotesque with nearly naked brown torsos a-sprawl in the sprinkle of light; and very safe, for here carabao had grazed the grass short, there could be no secret approach, and ever the sentry turned his head and swept the circle around him. And his ears were as the ears of a deer, or of a Malanao warrior.

Yet every now and then he stirred, bent his head to listen, puzzled. Twice he leaned forward to wake the nearest sleeper, but reconsidered it. He heard something; it was not the rustle of leaves nor the creaking of trees, it was not the soughing of wind nor the movement of any wild thing; he could not place it at all, and his slant brow wrinkled in cogitation. And he never thought to look up at the curiously agitated *tuba* trail.

But it was along that trail Paxton, erstwhile the coward, came to the end of the long chase Sergeant Rothlin's captors had led him through the jungle.

Slowly, slowly, he made his way along the perilous aerial road that led from tree to tree. Now his white man's weight bent the yielding bamboo almost to the breaking point; now his white man's lack of balance sense set him reeling giddily. But always he beat back his dizziness; he subdued his trembling. Silhouetted queerly in mid-air, his rifle slung over his shoulder, barefooted for silence of movement, he worked his way toward the sleeping camp and the watchful sentry.

And even in the midst of the suspense and the tensity of that journey—surely as strange a one as man ever made—he found space to wonder of the will that possessed him, that newly awakened will that put aside the agony of his bare and lacerated feet, put aside the fear of torture and death, and dared to dare the ultimate.

He reached the bamboo beneath which the sentry squatted. He saw the white face of Sergeant Rothlin upturned to him, eyes closed; he saw the clustered forms of the light-sleeping ladrones; in their midst he saw the terror of his boyish dreams in Malecon, the giant negro, a snarl twisting his brutal lips. And at that sight Paxton's only thought was wonder still that courage did not forsake him.

Very cautiously he unslung his rifle. Automatically then, for he had planned the thing well, he swung out from the tree, one foot at the intersection of the bamboo bridge, one hand gripping into the tuft of mammoth leaves. And it was a full twenty feet to the ground. But he released his hold and leaped, a human catapult. The butt of his rifle was down, and its aim was the sentry's head.

Mid-distance, he knew he had failed, for the tree quivered, and the sentry started up with a cry. Then the rifle-butt crashed home, and he knew he had succeeded in part. The sentry fell like a stricken bullock. Paxton crumpled down upon his body, breath and strength for the instant knocked out of him. Consciousness, too, almost; it was like a rising tide swirling over his mind; but with a great effort he beat back that tide and rose above it.

What was it he had come to do? Ah!

Sergeant Rothlin, awakened, was holding up his bound hands. Paxton seized the sentry's bolo and cut the bands. Then he struggled to his feet.

All around him the natives were rising, bewildered, jabbering. The night was dreadful with their cries. It was like an inferno of waking imps. Paxton was still confused from his fall, half-stunned; and suddenly the old panic came over him. And he started to run.

He started to; no more. He checked himself as though he had been shot. A

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sudden flaming thought had come to him. What was it he had come to do? To rescue Sergeant Rothlin, yes; but what else? And then the answer was given him.

Six yards away from him the negro renegade leaped up. His form loomed horrible in the night. A murderous kris was in his hand. He bellowed inarticulately. He started toward Paxton, and he seemed to Paxton the embodiment of all the terrors of the world.

And it was to conquer those terrors that had made him less than a man. . . .

Paxton sprang to meet the renegade, whipping out his revolver. He might have shot him dead, but he did not. Queerly, it seemed to Paxton that it was necessary to keep him alive. It was not for the reason that developed so obviously later. Paxton dove within the swing of the flashing kris, and thrust his revolver against the negro's chest.

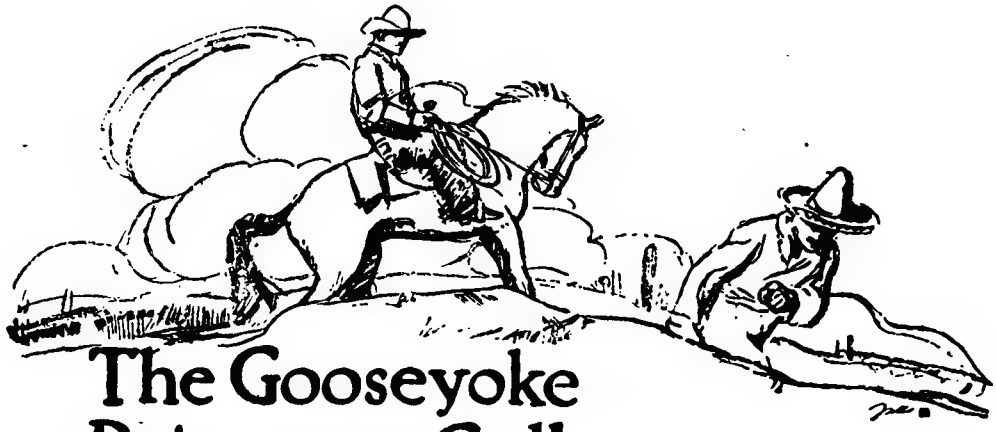
Then from behind him came Rothlin's voice, quiet, assured, authoritative:

"Easy, easy! Don't shoot. Back him away."

Twenty natives muttered in undertones, shifting uneasily, squinting red eyes a-gleam in the starlight, nervous hands twitching toward their bolo hilts. But they saw their leader captive, he whom they had endowed with supernatural power; and they had heard his quavering voice bidding them keep peace. So they listened well while Sergeant Rothlin, in what broken Tagalog he knew, delivered his colonel's message concerning the use and the purpose and the inevitability of white man's law in Moroland.

Perhaps the message lost something in the retelling, for the grizzled old sergeant was not a man of words. But as he talked, in his quiet, even-tempered way, insensibly the muttering ceased, and there were hanging heads among them. It may be that they, too, caught from the man they would have killed a message of human understanding—such as dimmed Paxton's eyes when Rothlin said to him later:

"It sure was a soldierly thing to do, Paxton, a soldierly thing. But then, of course, *you're a soldier.*"



The Gooseyoke Returns a Call

by E·E·HARRIMAN

Author of "Ritter's Pond," "Vag," etc.

PAP GLEASON was irritated, deeply, swearingerously irritated with his son Bob. He was erupting volcanically at irregular intervals. It all began with Bob's objection to the methods of Pedro Gonzales. When he rode over a low ridge just in time to catch Pedro in the act of running off five of the best saddle animals on the Gooseyoke Ranch, he lost his temper and roped Pedro at once. The gentleman from the other side hit the soil of Texas with the

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back of his head and at once proceeded to take a little *pasear* at the end of Bob's rope.

There are many forms of athletic exercise that are more popular than being the dragee in such a case. When Pedro had ricocheted off a dozen rocks, that stuck up in the line of travel, and had accumulated half a thousand cactus spines along his various soft spots, Bob slacked his rope and rode back to inspect his catch.

"Hola, Pedro!" he hailed the descendant of Montezuma. "Why so much language? Great on the *hablar*, ain't you? You certainly look *muy lindo* after yer slide. Too bad my rope didn't ketch a little higher an' make a good Mex of you. Now shake yer arms out'n the loop an' git up, dang ye. I'm a-goin' t' act as escort until you hit t'other side the Rio. This ain't no time t' be feelin' fer cactus. Git on yer laigs an' viajar out'n here, *muy pronto*, ye —— —— —— thief of sixteen generations. Git, —— ye!"

So Pedro rose and traveled as ordered, across five miles of Texas and into the muddy Rio Grande, groaning maledictions and threats all the way. When the water lapped his thighs he turned and discharged a volley of bastard Spanish oaths and obscenity at Bob, coupled with a threat to come back some day with backing, and watch Bob die very slowly. He stated that the death would be very slow, indeed, but very satisfactory to Pedro. He would have carried his vocal exercise much farther, but Bob tired of it and dropped an accurate bullet in the water and splashed his mouth full. He sat his horse and saw Pedro climb the south bank, then turned back and gathered the bunch of caballos, including the one Pedro had ridden over.

When Bob told his story that evening, he became a target for all. His brothers, Joe and Dick, were ably assisted by the rest of the punchers, but they all took a back seat when Pap came in and heard the tale. His whiskers curled with scorn.

"You saphead!" he roared. "That there danged greaser will travel a thousand miles to do ye dirt now. Ev'ry —— ladrone on t'other side thinks thievin' is his nat'ral right an' ye insulted him a heap wuss when ye drug him an' took them hosses away, than ye would if ye'd called his mother names or stuck a knife in him. Why'n —— didn't ye drap him in th' mud, 'stid of splashin' water on him?

"I bet that greaser'll rake hell with a fine tooth comb t' git a band of his own kind an' come back after ye. Ye oughtta drapped him right thar. Now ye gotta be watchin' out fer a shot from th' mesquite er a knife in th' dark. ——!"

"Let 'im come," said Bob savagely and disgustedly. "I ain't worryin' none. I don't mind lookin' at Pedro over th' bar'l of a six-gun er a 30-30 any old time he's good an' ready."

"That's all right," said Pap. "But he ain't aimin' t' give ye no chancst. D'ye reckon he'll fight it out in th' open? Don't ye know greasers yit? He won't let ye glimpse him afore he strikes, if he can help it. Ye gotta be watchin' fer a lick in th' dark. What in —— ever made ye act soft thataway?"

"Why, Pap, that doggoned Mex looked like a pincushion. They wa'n't ary place on his hide where I could a-stabbed him with the muzzle o' my gun 'thout hittin' a needle. Them cactus sure was plenty thick in his hide an' I hadn't th' heart t' send 'im t' hell like that. That'd be doublin' punishment."

Bob grinned and winked at "Long Sim" Harmon, a redhead puncher.

"Ye needn't be winkin' an' grinnin'," stormed Pap. "Ye made a —— calf o' yerself. You jest lay low an' keep shady till we're sure Pedro is planted. 'Tain't so funny as it looks to a fool."

Pap dropped the matter there and left his first-born to look out for himself. He must fight his own battles in his own way. Pap had an idea that if Bob used a little caution he would pull through all right, in spite of his dire prophesies. Bob was cautious for all of two weeks and then he decided that it looks plumb bad to see a real American casting glances behind him lest some one sneak the blade of a knife under his shoulder-blade.

"I'll be —— if I'm goin' 'round actin' like I had real trouble jest because a greaser hoss-thief gits mad," he said to Dick. "Let 'im come. I'll try my ——est to make it interestin' fer 'im."

Three peaceful months went by and the Gooseyoke had almost dropped Pedro from memory. Not a sign or hint had come to any one this side the Rio that he was alive. Pap was hustling the punchers in getting enough fat steers rounded up to fill eight cars, to complete a sale he had made. He

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had not thought of anything but beef for weeks.

Bob was listed among the disabled now, an outlaw horse having put him out of the game by grinding his leg against a log fence when the hackamore broke. He hobbled about on a crude pair of crutches, mending harness, saddles and boots, overhauling the storeroom and putting its contents in order. In the cook-house, old Gow pottered among his pans and skillets, chanting a Chinese—I had almost said melody—song about an ancient warrior and his battles. They were the only human beings around the place, Bob and Gow, and the sun was sliding down the Western sky.

Bob hung the last strap in place and left the storeroom. He was going across the hard-packed clay of the yard to reach the adobe house. *Tap, chuff, tap, chuff,* crutch and boot, crutch and boot, he left the storeroom and passed out into the wide space between buildings. He heard a sound that made him pause to look, then he yelled.

"Gow! Oh, Gow! Y' old yella-bellied son o' sin! Hi there, Gow!"

Bob roared the words as his crutch swung him along the ground. The cook stuck his wrinkled visage out of the cook-house door and sent back an answering yell, shrill and piercing.

"Whalla malla you? Allee timee yell whoopee likee ——! Whuffaw?"

"Greasers, you —— —— Chink, Mex hoss thieves! Hike for the house, quick! Git an' git quick er they'll fill ye full of lead. Hike, ye —— —— son of a frypan!"

Up from a draw two hundred yards west of the house came a charging band of horsemen, their straw sombreros and gaudy serapes telling their nationality. Pedro was coming to conduct the festivities he had promised months ago.

Gow received Bob's admonition and information with a squeal. He dodged back, then out and his short legs paddled swiftly across to the house. In his right hand he carried a sawed-off shotgun of a liberal bore, in his left a canvas sack with shoulder-strap, full of buckshot shells. He reached the door while Bob was still many yards away. He chucked gun and sack inside, whirled and started for Bob. Two steps he made and stopped. A cavalcade swept 'round the corner into the yard and straightened out at full speed.

Gow made the two steps he had taken into only one on the way back. He slid into the house on his belly, while a hail of bullets went crashing through the door and casing. Some pattered on the dobe walls and one drilled Gow through the right calf and he grunted. His hands were on his shotgun and he rolled to his back, yelling his war-cry. He pulled the hammers back and raised the muzzle.

" —— gleasah! Me show 'im!"

The muzzle of the gun swung in the direction of the leaders and Gow pulled both triggers. The game was well bunched and Gow had no illusions against pot shots. Back, like an echo to the roar of his shots, came shrill screams of men and squeals of horses. Over on their heads pitched two horses and their riders. Riding low, the Mexicans had held their faces in line with their horses' ears and each became the bull's-eye of a charge.

Gow broke his gun and flipped new shells into the chambers with nimble fingers. The last greaser in the line went out of his saddle sideways, nearly cut in half by the double charge at short range. Then they were gone, like the passing of a cyclone, leaving Bob's crutches lying across each other on the dry clay.

Gow stood on his good leg, clinging to the door-jamb, and looked at the crutches. Their mute appeal seemed to touch some spring of emotion in the leathery old cook, for he swore violently in three languages. Then he hobbled back into the house. Ten minutes later a red table-cloth was bent to the halliards of the flagstaff on the house and was flapping in the breeze. Gow knotted a towel on his punctured leg and anathematized Mexico and all its inhabitants.

"Bimeby come Joe, come Dick, come ol' man, allee punchah he come. —— gleasah he ketchee ——. Allee samee, Gow he ketchee thlee an' two hoss. Plitty good floh ol' yella belly, huh?"

Hobbling back to the cook-house, Gow laid his gun ready to his hand and went on with his duties.

War might invade the peaceful precincts of the Gooseyoke, but it must not interfere with the meals. So Gow limped about, his right trousers leg rolled up and blood trickling down his ankle, while he invented new Oriental-Occidental oaths.

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FAR out on the range Pap was making things hustle, including the rough-and-ready bunch of punchers and his boys. Three hundred and odd of fat steers were being held by Long Sim Harmon, "Frizzle-face" Bill Hudson and "Oklahoma" Dan Grier. The air was thick with dust and cuss words. Tom Griffin and Steve Gates were bringing in more cattle and Pap was bossing the selection of stockyard candidates.

One of the punchers caught sight of Gow's war flag and raised a yell. His semaphore signals were scarcely needed after that, for a glance told them all that trouble had hit the main roost. Pap set the spurs into his roan and shot past the bunch.

"Everybody ride like ——!" he yelled, with a wave of his arm.

The surprised herd stared after their captors of a moment ago in pure astonishment. The incoming bunch of steers scattered as Tom and Steve went through it. The drumming of racing hoofs came back to the little valley for a moment and then all was silence. The cattle began to slowly separate and wander into the low brush.

Gow had just succeeded in evolving a new and complicated curse in a mixture of pidgin-Texan, Chinese and Spanish, which he was putting on the entire Mexican nation with much gusto, when he again heard the thunder of flying horsemen. He ran in a halting fashion to the door and Pap hailed him at once.

"What th' ——'s happened here? Where's Bob? Who killed these greasers an' hosses? Speak up, —— ye."

Gow shuffled down the steps and told his story with wide gesturing.

"Bob him gone. —— gleasah ketchee him. Come he floh, fli dozen, shootee me in leg, ketchee him Bob. Gleasah yellee like ——, me get gun, gleasah heap ketchee buckshot, blag him belly, no moh lide, allee samee dead. —— good tling. Me likee one moh chance."

"Didn't Bob have his six-gun?"

"Him six-gun on him bled. No can ketchee. Him gone allee samee one time. Mebbeso closs Lio Glande by now."

The last of the riders swept into the yard and huddled about Pap. For their benefit he put Gow's pidgin into plain Texan.

"Gow says four-five dozen danged greasers come hell-rollickin' in here, snagged Bob, plugged Gow in the calf, and lit fer Mexico. A —— of a muss. Th' Chink got them a-layin' there. —— good ol' yella belly, that Gow. Wisht he'd a-been four an' all heeled same way. They'd cleaned the gang. Mebbe they'd a-got Pedro with th' rest o' th' buzzard feed. That's Pedro's cousin Miguel under th' black hoss. Worked fer me once.

"Dick, rustle them new guns, right spry, too. Joe, bust open a crate o' shells an' give th' boys a-plenty. Bill, you an' th' rest pull th' saddles off them dead hosses an' pick up the guns. Then haul th' carrion down th' hill with th' wind, so 'twont stink us out afore we git a chance for a buryin'."

"What about them greasers?"

"Pile 'em with the hosses. Th' four-legged ones is a heap the best o' th' two. Save what shells they got fer the rifles an' anythin' else worth savin'. But git 'em away from here right soon. Gow, ye got any grub ready?"

"Heap plenty chuck," said Gow, starting for his stove. "All leady fi minute."

"All right. Bill, you an' Dan an' Sim git the cavayard in. We need fresh hosses. Scoot! Tom, you git in an' eat right away. I want you t' git a move on an' raise th' Sawtooth an' Bar Y boys. We ain't no match fer all Mexico an' there ain't no knowin' how many we'll run into. I figger we could lick —— out'n what called here, but they may have twicet as many more t'other side.

"They's 'leven o' us an' mebbe we can git fourteen-fifteen out'n the Sawtooth an' Bar Y. That'd give us a fightin' chance agin Villa. Joe's got them catridges ready an' Dick is settin' th' rifles out. Heel yerselves, boys. Hurry up fer I've got a itch in my trigger-finger that ain't a-goin' to git no better till I scratch it by pullin' down on that skunk Pedro."

"You better leave that to me 'n Dick," said Joe. "You ain't so young as you was twenty year ago, Pap. Let us young fellers do th' scrappin'."

"—— an' damnation!" roared Pap. "Ain't I in th' saddle as many hours in th' day as you be an' as many days in th' year, too, by ——? Did ye ever hear o' me shirkin' a scrap yit? Ain't Bob my boy, even if he did act th' —— fool when he had Pedro once? Who's a-goin' to stop me from bein' in on this yer fracas, hey?"

"No one ain't a-goin' t' try, Pap," said

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Joe apologetically. "I jest thought it might be kinda hard on ye an' you was seventy last month. I ain't meanin' no insult, Pap."

"Well," said the old man, mollified. "When you see yer ol' pap git shaky over a scrap er so it makes him stop an' argy when it's time fer shootin', why then it'll be time t' talk about lettin' th' like o' you take his place. Now you git Bob's belt an' see that both guns is plumb full. I aim t' git that belt inta Bob's hands while the scrap is a-goin' on."

The men who had been set at the task of removing the dead from the field of battle were just snaking the last horse down the hill. Gow was rattling on a pan with a big spoon to let them know his grub was on the table. Dick and Joe had portioned out rifles and shells for each man. Then all turned as the three who had gone out after the cavayard came clattering in at the wide gate.

"Where's the cavayard?" said Pap, as they stopped.

"Gone t' —— er Mexico," said Sim. "Not a —— thing left, 'cept Piute an' he's layin' jest inside th' fence, daid. Plugged, by ——."

Pap's lean face flooded with red beneath the tan. His hands shut tightly and his blue eyes blazed. For a moment he could not speak and the punchers waited in silence.

"Shot ol' Piute, did he?" said the old man at last. "That was th' best —— cattle hoss in Texas in his day. Kerried me more'n ten year an' was like a friend ye'd lend yer gun to in a scrap."

He looked about at the lean, wind-reddened, sun-tanned faces before him. He breathed hard three times and lifted his hand.

"I'll get that skunk Pedro on two counts now, if I have to foller 'im plumb inta th' palace er chase 'im under th' President's bed. He's kerried off my son an' killed my pet hoss. —— 'im to th' worst corner of th' meanest hell ever was thought of. Boys, git in an' eat. We ain't got no fresh hosses, but we're goin' after Pedro."

Tom came out as the rest went in to eat and Pap told him to meet them at the ford or follow fast if the Gooseyoke outfit crossed first. He picked up his rifle, swung on his horse and was gone. In a few minutes the boys began to straggle out again, having bolted their food in haste. Pap came out and called the punchers to him.

"Fellers," he said, "we gotta chase snakes with fresh mounts, an' we hain't an extry hoss in th' bunch. That means we gotta show we know hosses better'n they do. Ev'ry man kerries a canteen an' feed fer his hoss an' th' hoss gets most of his water. Git 'em."

The men scattered after canteens and grain, assembling again in a short time. They rode out of the place with Gow waving his dish-cloth at them and uttering profane wishes concerning the greasers. They crossed the Rio with a broad, plain trail ahead of them. Pedro had ridden secure in the thought that no body of Americano punchers would dare invade Mexico just now. He counted on the deterrent effect of the many marauding bands that constantly marched and countermarched in search of booty. They might fight among their own bands, but a single hatred against the gringo bound them into one fagot against everything north of the Rio.

PAP halted his men on the south bank and they clustered to hear what he might say. Gone was his loud-voiced boisterousness of the ranch. His eyes glittered and burned. Lean, gray and wrinkled, he yet carried the impression of virile force and inexhaustible nerve. He sat his powerful horse as easily as the best of them.

"Boys," he began in a low tone that carried to every ear. "That trail is headin' straight for Hidden Spring. They got the start of us, they're ridin' light an' have our cavayard for a change of hosses. They'll git to th' spring way ahead of us. It's likely they'll set a sentry post a bit this side th' spring, but it won't be far. They won't more'n half expect us t' foller, at any rate, not without more men. Dan, you stop right here an' wait fer them Sawtooth an' Bar Y fellers. Listen good, fer you gotta tell 'em what t' do.

"Some o' you boys knows Hidden Spring an' I'm tellin' them as don't. That thar ridge, over yon as fur as ye can see, is busted danged near th' middle. They's a gateway, like, that's about forty-fifty foot wide. Jest beyant th' gap lays a rock bigger'n ary house in Texas an' under its aidge is Hidden Spring. It trickles inta a basin that'll hold a couple o' bar'ls an' th'

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overflow runs through th' gap. Right thar alongside th' spring is a li'l draw slopin' down t' th' gap an' full o' clumps o' bushes. There they'll camp.

"Now comes my plan. I know another gap, not so easy but possible, two mile west. We leave this yer trail right hyer an' swing 'round to that thar west gap. Dan brings them other bucks along th' trail Pedro makes, follerin' slow. We git past th' ridge an' sneak down towards th' spring. It'll be plumb dark, but I know th' trail.

"When we git within half a mile we leave th' caballos in a draw an' hoof it. Bill an' Johnny Dean hugs that thar ridge, keepin' just below th' skyline. Sim an' Dick an' Jack Bates crawls clost to its bottom whar they gits a peep straight inta th' spring cave. Tom an' Steve circles an' comes up on top o' th' spring rock an' Joe an' his ol' ricketty pap come in at th' head o' th' draw, slide on down between you fellers an' find Bob. When we git him an' hand 'im his guns we don't keer a —— how soon hell blows up.

"Dan an' his bunch is layin' low jest beyant th' sentry an' we drive them devils through th' gap plumb inta their arms. I aim t' git you fellers placed afore moonrise. It won't be very much of a light, but it'll help some. You watch out fer my signal an' don't raise no —— till ye see it. When I'm good an' ready I'll light a cigaret inside my hat an' you git yer targets picked so ye can light in right peart after ye see it. Now don't none of ye fergit instructions."

Dan dropped off his horse, loosened the cinch, rolled a cigaret and dropped at full length. Pap turned his roan and led the way on the old dead trail that would take him within two miles of the west gap. The punchers fell in behind him and muffled their noses in their looped bandannas, as the horses struck the little jigging fox-trot of the long trails.

The dust rose and rolled off over the plain in a brown cloud. All conversation ceased and every eye scanned the landscape constantly. Soon the head of the little column reached a draw between little rolling hills and drew its tail in after it. The buzzards circled slowly, the flies clustered and Oklahoma Dan swore as he fought them.

The sun slid slowly down the west and dropped behind the horizon, sending up long bars and streamers of light, as though it waved a last farewell to the winding river. The sky turned to yellow, to red, to gray, and the first star twinkled down on a dull, monotonous landscape. Far from the river, a little cavalcade scrambled up a steep pitch, to a narrow, rocky pass through high and rugged walls. A little later, when the full depth of darkness had fallen, illuminated only by the stars, ten horses rested weary legs in a well-hidden draw, while ten men crept silently eastward.

"Gimme a chaw, Johnny," whispered Bill, as they rested an instant in their careful progression along the ridge. "I got hyderphoby an' got to bite suthin'. You'n me gotta git that danged Pedro jest a mite ahead o' them other fellers. ——! I wisht we had a searchlight."

"Don't be too danged previous about Pedro," answered Johnny. "I reckon Pap is figgerin' on hangin' up his scalp an' he'll be hot if we got in ahead. We don't want to make no bobble nowhere. Gotta be sure we don't plug the ol' man or Bob."

" 'Sall right, but we ain't a-goin' t' be loafin' along in th' rear none, when th' scrap gits a-goin'," said Bill.

The last man of the little band had settled his body among the sage and cactus when the moon rose. At the south end of the draw where the bandit camp lay, Pap and Joe lay flat on their stomachs, ready to start their crawl. Pap touched Joe with a signaling toe and drew himself forward and down. Their rifles had been left behind, for it was six-gun work only, as far as they were concerned. Joe slid onward beside his father, reaching out a long arm and powerful hand to dig deep in the sand or hook a bush.

The moon crawled slowly up its pathway, casting its beams farther and farther across the curving, sandy bottom. Up above, snuggled in on a little shelf of rock, Johnny and Bill watched the gradual advance of illumination. A jagged parapet cast its dense shadow over them and a few loose fragments in front added to their concealment.

"Ketch that black spot jest to the left of th' spring rock," breathed Bill in Johnny's ear. "It moved a second ago."

Johnny looked and made out what he took to be a blanket-shrouded sleeper. Even as he watched this, a slight movement far over to his right and up the draw, attracted his eye. There were many forms

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of sleeping men visible there and one had rolled, as in a troubled sleep. In a moment it rolled again. Johnny touched Bill and got a fierce grip in return that told him Bill was watching the same thing. He kept his gaze on this figure and saw it roll again and again, always down the slope and straight toward a solitary figure that lay in a peculiarly strained posture. Bill shut his hand again on Johnny's arm.

Pap and Joe crawled at a snail's pace, listening, watching, making every movement with careful deliberation. Four times they had gained their own length and still no hint as to the location of Bob. Then they began a new slide of inches and Pap touched Joe. He stopped all movement and strained his ears. Up from the bottom of the scooped out basin below the spring came a muffled voice.

"*Agua*, you —— polecats. Caint ye give a feller a drink? *Agua*, —— —— your rotten hearts!"

Two or three sleepers stirred and one laughed. Just in front of Pap, one rose on his elbow, his head bent forward to look down at the speaker. He sniggered with enjoyment and Pap slid quickly forward. His right hand went to his hip, rose and fell suddenly. The supporting arm of the sniggerer gave out and he fell with his face in the sand. There had been but little sound with that blow, for it had fallen, not on the skull, but across the neck just below the skull.

"Stay here," whispered Pap to Joe, as he appropriated the blanket of the late sniggerer. A compadre of his spoke sleepily.

"What aileth thee, Jose? Lie still, you —— —— ——, and let better men sleep."

"Si," answered Pap, promptly and in greaser Spanish, "But of a verity the fleas are worse than usual tonight."

The other accepted the explanation and returned to his snoring. A wait of a few minutes to make sure, a swap for the sombrero Jose had no further use for, and Pap began the calculated roll which Johnny and Bill had their eyes on now.

It was a long and trying period for Johnny and Bill, that time of watching the slow, silent turn, the wait to see if any waked, the turn once more and again, till Pap could place a hand on the figure that had given the plaintive, even if abusive, call for water. In his eager and excited watching, Johnny forgot possible silhouettes and rose to the full length of his arms. Bill glanced at him and put a rough hand on Johnny's head. With frantic fingers he shoved it down below the skyline. His grip was painful and Johnny took the hint.

For a long time they watched the two figures lying close together and then the two began to crawl, leaving their blankets in a pile that bore a great resemblance to the one figure that had lain there so long. The two did not try the former means of progression, but traveled on hands and knees, the smaller one leading.

Joe waited with his hands filled, ready to open up at the first alarm. Up on the top of the spring rock and at the base of the ridge below Bill and Johnny, the rest of the boys rested like quivering hounds in leash, when the quarry leaps beneath their noses.

ON THE stillness sounded a faint scratch and a light leaped in the darkness, illuminating the inside of a sombrero, and every hand tightened on a gun. An instant of darkness and another flash. The third flare had barely shown when the stillness was rent by the crash of guns and the tiny valley was streaked with fire from three directions. The bandits snatched at their rifles and struggled from sleep into action, confused, scared, half-blinded.

Down the trail rose a wild pæn of savage joy, a composite yell of welcome to the call to battle. A shot from the lone sentry, answered by a crashing volley, then the sputtering of horses' feet and the shrill yell of excited punchers, told that the Sawtooth and Bar Y boys had started south to meet the driven horde of murderers.

"It's Dan an' the Sawtooth an' Bar Y," yelled Johnny, slapping bullets into every dark spot that moved. "Hear 'em toot!"

"You bet!" said Bill as he stopped a stooping figure that ran for shelter. "Whoopee! Yip-i-yaddy-i-yay! Yip-yip-pee! Give 'em he—uh!"

His rifle dropped from nerveless fingers and his head hit the rock. Johnny gritted his teeth and fired more carefully into the shadows. A bullet cut the stem of a weed beside his face and another tore the muscles of his right shoulder. His rifle dropped and he reached for a six-gun with his left

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hand. A little to his left and thirty yards ahead red flames were spurting from the deep shadow of a cleft in the farther abutment of the rock ridge. With methodical care he sent six messengers into the blackness.

He saw no more flashes from that quarter and put his hand up to feel his injured shoulder. Satisfied that it was merely a flesh wound, he massaged the muscles roughly till the numbness departed and he could once more use his rifle. As he filled the magazine with shells he watched the slope. He saw flashes coming in pairs from three points close abreast and his heart leaped. Pap and his two boys were covering that section. He glanced across to the spring rock and noted the two streams of fire that lighted its corners.

There was a little lull at the top of the slope, as Pap and the boys jammed fresh loads into their cylinders, then Pap's voice rose above the noise of the mêlée and the men at the sides ceased firing as Pap and Joe charged down the slope, holding well apart that Bob might shoot between them. The fragment of Pedro's gang had enough and more.

With yells of terror, half of them dropping their guns in panic, they surged from the fifty-foot gap. Leaping down from their perches the Gooseyoke punchers joined Pap and Joe, and Bob laid his guns in his lap with a sigh of resignation. He mourned that a leg should shut him out from further participation in the festival.

Barely through the gap, Pap allowed his force to follow. Then he bade them halt and give the force under Oklahoma Dan a chance. Scattering like a flock of quail in the brush, the remnant of the band dived for shelter and hiding. They melted out of sight while jacketted bullets searched the corners and whined their disappointment.

"Anybody laid out?" queried Dan, as he rode up.

"Naw! Not permanent, anyhow," said Pap. "Not so fur as I know."

They came back through the gap to find Johnny on his perch, trying to ascertain how badly Bill had been nicked. Sim and Steve carried the body down and laid it on the sand in front of Pap. Jack Bates kindled a fire of dry brush close by and Tom stooped to put his hand on Bill's head.

"Poor ol' Bill!" he murmured. "You was a danged good puncher and a better friend. Too bad they got ye. Plumb through the head."

He ran an inquiring finger into the wound and the head of the corpse jerked angrily to one side.

"Keep yer —— fingers off'n that bump, will ye?" said Bill's voice. "It's as sore as ——."

"What, ain't you daid yit, you danged ol' maverick?" said Tom in surprise. "We was jest figgerin' on a —— of a big funeral, with a wake an' lots o' budge to make it lively."

"Daid nawthin'!" said Bill, peevishly. "I jest got a lick from a splinter knocked off a rock an' it raised a lump. Say, Tawm, didn't no one git Pedro? Don't tell me that —— —— —— got off."

"Naw. Johnny ketched 'im plumb center with a six-gun, after he got tetched in the shoulder. Hit 'im three times an' two of 'em plumb in th' back. Hold up there! Ketch Pap!"

Pap had stood straight and cool while Bill was being examined, but he had wavered as Tom gave his last answer. Now Joe and Steve had him in their arms and lowered him gently to some of the bandit blankets. Dick and Sim were just coming down from above with Bob between them. They set Bob down beside the blankets and bent over the old man. He grinned up at them cheerfully and indomitably.

"Don't git skeered. I jest got teched a couple a-times an' I been leakin' a little. 'Tain't nothin' worth mentionin'."

They plugged a hole in his thigh, they bandaged a crease across his ribs. Then they made camp and wrapped him up for a snooze, while four of the men from the Sawtooth and two from the Bar Y went off with Dick to get the horses. Just before Pap went to sleep he spoke to Bob and the younger man turned a meek and apologetic face to hear.

"Let this be a warnin' to ye, son. Don't never let a rattler nor a greaser hoss-thief loose when ye once git 'em. Make 'em good fer keeps an' they's only good when they're daid."

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The Serpent's Phrase

by GORDON YOUNG

Author of "The Unlisted Legion," "U. S. A.," etc.

"WAIT here," said Jacques.

He left me in the hallway behind the portieres which he pushed aside as he entered the room. I caught a glimpse of a woman leaning forward to drop the ash of a cigaret on to the tray beside her.

"Madame, I have found a man," he said.

"Show him in," she answered languidly. "And Jacques, I won't want the car tonight and you may lock the house now. Lock it carefully."

I went in. I felt ill at ease and no doubt I looked so as I stood just inside the doorway for some moments while she, one hand above her head and pressed against the coils of black hair, lay back and scrutinized me through bright, narrowed eyes.

She saw a man somewhat below middle age who appeared to be rather older than he was by reason of the few days' growth of beard, a man in soiled collar and baggy clothes such as might have been slept in on a park bench, a man who must have looked as though he had long before tumbled out of respectable society—if, indeed, he had ever been in it.

"You have no friends? No relatives?" she asked.

Hers was a low cold voice.

"None," I said; then added with careful honesty—"None that know where I am."

"I need a discreet, honest man for a few days. I shall pay well."

"And the nature of the work, Madame?"

"Consists largely in not asking questions," she replied quickly, tossing her cigaret on to the tray and sitting up. "I can't endure inquisitive people," she explained with a trace of a smile as she carelessly flung the silky folds of her red robe out of her lap. "All I want is for you to stay in the house for a few days—and protect me," she added seductively, looking into my face from beneath drooping lids.

"Surely," I answered, "the men you know are not so ungallant that you must rely on a chance stranger picked up at midnight in the street?"

"I have my reasons for not trusting the men I know," she said mysteriously and sighed, all the while watching me with the coquettish assurance of a woman whose wiles have held countless men to heel.

She was beautiful—strangely so. Her face was richly tinted and perfect as a cameo in old ivory; her heavy, serpentine coils of hair were black as the silk that sheathed her slender ankles; her lips red as a viper's tongue, and her body lithe, suggestive of grace in every line and movement. Beautiful—and dangerous.

"You will not desert me?" she asked, her voice low and sweet, with an overtone that hinted at the wonderful things a woman may shower on the man to whom she takes a fancy.

"No," I said.

She felt that that would be the only answer any man would make when she

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had sent Jacques out to pick up some penniless fellow of about my description.

"Thank you. I won't even ask your name. But you will please not be surprised if I address you as Monsieur Alliot, as Monsieur Armond C. Alliot."

It was so unexpected that right then I showed a bit of surprise.

"What is there familiar to you in that?" she sharply demanded, sitting up stiffly and searching my face with those vivid black eyes curtained by long-beaded lashes.

"Nothing," I replied, "except the initials are the same as the monogram on the limousine that brought me here."

"Oh." She was somewhat reassured, but still suspicious. "You are to be my brother. I couldn't keep a strange man in the house unless he was a servant or a brother."

"But—Madame—" I said incredulously, emphasizing the "Madame" enough to imply that I thought it strange that the initials of a married woman should coincide with those of her brother.

"I've taken my maiden name again," she answered quickly. Then, suspiciously —"You seem to be observing—rather too much so."

"But, Mademoiselle," I protested apologetically, "would I not have been intensely dull not to have scrutinized everything that attended my strange summons to you? When one who is about to seek a doorstep as his couch for the night is called into a limousine, certainly he must see and speculate on the monogram marked on the door. And when brought to such a beautiful home as this and left in the hall, his ears could do no less than hear your chauffeur address you as Madame."

"Perhaps. Perhaps so," she said doubtfully, and for a moment I thought she was to turn me out of the house.

But instead she instructed me not to be curious any more, and with a smile that would have won a saint from his beads promised—

"And we shall be good friends, very good friends."

II

IT WAS around three o'clock when I again opened the door of the room given me and poked out an ear. The house was silent as the tombs of Egypt. I was sure no one was about. Sounds seemed to carry far in that house; and once before, around two, I had hastily retreated from half-way down the stairs when I heard Madame moving about in the hall. But she had not gone into the room I wished to investigate.

I had a few skeleton keys and a flashlight; and I was barefoot and in the pajamas Jacques had furnished.

I got down the stairs noiselessly and to the door of the room. It was locked, but did not remain so long. With some reason for it, I am considered by even Federal authorities as something of an expert with locks and safes.

I went in and raised a window, then began my search. I had no time to be careful not to disturb things, so I turned the room topsy-turvy. I emptied the drawers of Madame's desk and scattered papers broadcast after making sure there was nothing among them that I cared for. Then I went to the safe. The combination was a little more difficult than I had expected, but the door swung open in a few minutes and almost at once I came upon a box of jewels. I scattered some of these about the room and tossed the others out of the window. Then I gave attention to some papers and found all that I had come after. What I had believed was confirmed.

Seeing that the room was disordered to my satisfaction, I picked up a large bronze vase and carrying it with me up the stairs I opened the door of my room, then threw the vase—threw it so that it cleared the stairs, but bounded and resounded in the hallway below like a Chinese alarm. I darted into my room and gently closed the door.

Madame from somewhere below screamed.

Jacques went bounding down the stairs and I followed. No servants came running; for, as I had known very well, Madame would have none other than Jacques in the house at night, and sent them home after dinner.

Madame was excited; but appeared very beautiful in a nightdress of white chiffon, and very determined with the small automatic that seemed quite large in her small hand.

She spoke furiously to Jacques in French, but I understood what she said, though I pretended to gape uncomprehendingly; and after she had vehemently warned him

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not to let a word of the burglary get to the servants or police, I solicitously ventured to ask if I should not call up the police department.

"No," she said angrily, "get to your room—and stay there"

The next morning I learned from Jacques that the burglars had evidently been frightened away in some unaccountable manner by overturning a bronze vase so that the thing—most remarkably—had rolled clear out into the hall. No, Madame had lost nothing. Absolutely nothing. The burglars had been after jewels, and most of the loot had been scattered outside the window—dropped, evidently, in the precipitous haste with which they withdrew. There must have been more than one, for the disordered room looked as though a swarm had been busily ransacking Madame's library most of the night.

But neither Madame nor Jacques—who perhaps had better reason for doing so than she—attached the least suspicion to me.

By the following night I had pretty well gotten the lay of the house; and knowing that it was servantless, and that Jacques was curled up on the seat of the limousine out in front waiting to take home Madame's guest, I slipped downstairs and stood behind the portieres in the hallway to listen. I could see very well and hear perfectly.

I believe that Madame had Jacques waiting on the car in front, whenever she had company, as an excuse for keeping him out of the house, since she went so far as to do without servants in the evening as a precaution against eavesdropping. Madame had—or thought she had—no reason to be apprehensive over me.

Jacques had reported to her that I was dead drunk. Following her instructions he had brought to my room enough wine and brandy to have put a satyr down and out; and I had tried to look and act as a man would who drank as much of Madame's excellent liquor as I had poured down the sink.

Jacques was no confidant of mine, though I had tried hard enough with only minor successes to make myself one of his. I had, some days before, told him such stories as seemed to suit the situation and had been permitted to polish his car for him while he sat by smoking; and because I did the work to suit him and asked for nothing more than a few plates of food smuggled from the house, he had allowed me to keep out of sight in the garage and sleep on a bundle of robes in the loft.

When Madame, much to his disgust, had instructed him to go out and pick up a friendless stranger off the streets, Jacques thought that I would serve as well as any other roustabout that he might find. Besides, I was right at hand and he rather liked me anyway, so he said; and after I had agreed under no circumstances to let her know to what extent he had failed in the letter of her instructions, he had driven me around the block a few times and ushered me in to Madame.

When I reached the portieres, Madame was talking earnestly. She stood close, affectionately close to a young man of fine military bearing who, with averted face, was staring unseeingly at the floor. She was in a gown of shining, close-fitting black, and her body was almost against him, her hands on his shoulders, her lips near his cheeks.

"Paul, Paul, you must do it for my sake—you must. If you love me you will do it," she repeated over and over with hypnotic iteration.

At length he faced her—

"But, Helena, think what you ask." He spoke gently, wistfully.

"It is for you—for you, Paul," she replied softly, stroking his cheek. "No one will ever know——"

"But I shall never be able to forget," he said.

"Oh, I'll make you forget!" she cried passionately. "I shall be yours—yours, Paul! Night and day, weeks, months and years—yours. My beast of a husband will let me go then. He has promised. That is his price. I loathe him, I hate him, but I don't dare leave him, Paul. He would kill me. He has agents all over the world—spies that would cut my throat if he whistled.

"But he has promised to let me go if you will give him that—that mere piece of paper. He wanted me to trap you, Paul, to make you love me. But to his face I told him that I loved you. And when he tried to grab me, I cried, 'Kill me, but do not touch me!' And he laughed, Paul. The drunken beast laughed, and said, 'Get that blueprint for me—and you can go to him—go forever.'"

Her voice rang with dramatic fervor

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and her lithe body reflected her emotion in quick appealing gestures. I could tell that his heart was pounding hot blood to his cheeks, and his arms gripped her unresistingly to him in a convulsive, passionate embrace.

"Paul, Paul," she whispered pleadingly, "you must do it. You must. If you love me, you will do it."

"Helena, I do love you. I do. But my country is at war. It may mean ruin. I am not thinking of myself—but of my country—of the women and children on the boats—of the sailors—of the soldiers on the transports."

"And you let people you do not know—vague women and children and sailors and soldiers you never saw and never heard of by name keep me from you?" she cried furiously in disappointment and scorn, struggling to free herself from his arms. "Paul, oh, Paul, you can't love me! You can't and do that." Then suddenly, determinedly, she added: "Come with me. You shall see for yourself. You shall see the drunken beast that claims me as his wife——"

And as she took him by the arm and turned toward the doorway I abruptly realized that I had been cast for more than eavesdropper in this ancient tragedy of Delilah, and withdrew in more haste than dignity.

I gained my room breathless, touseled my hair, tore loose an end of my collar, jumped into a padded lounging robe Jacques had put at my disposal, grasped a half-emptied bottle of brandy, and sprawled into a chair where I sat as though in drunken slumber, breathing stertorously, my head thrown back and an arm across my face so as to somewhat conceal my features.

Presently I heard their footsteps on the stairway—a pause before my room—then the door was flung confidently open. Taking a peek beneath a drowsy eyelid I saw the woman point at me dramatically as she hissed:

"There—there, Paul! You would leave me to spend my life with that!"

No matter what the young man had expected, it was not such a sight as I; and his wrought nerves were badly shaken. For a moment he stared loathingly at me, then said quietly, solemnly:

"I will do it. Helena, I will do it!"

Her bright black eyes gleamed for an instant, and her arms went around his neck. But gently he withdrew them, and holding her hands tenderly while he yet looked at me, he said—

"Perhaps he, too, has some time or other sold his country—and has to forget!"

She answered with laughter, strained, sardonic—an overtone of alarm in it—as she scanned his face for signs of weakening; then, as if afraid that her dramatic setting might defeat her plot, she drew him away. But until the door closed, his eyes rested on me as though he had envisioned his own miserable end.

It was some time before I again ventured down the stairs. But I had heard him go after a lingering good-night in the hallway, and I had heard her at once calling a number on the phone. I went close enough to hear, though she spoke softly with elation.

"Is that you, Armond? Yes, it is I, of course. He will do it! Has just this minute gone. The drunken husband did it!" She laughed gaily. "No. He won't weaken. He'll bring it here tomorrow evening. We'll have to get away the next morning—early. Oh, nothing was lost. Not a thing. I thought at first some of the jewelry was gone—they were after that—but it isn't. Nothing incriminating at all.

"I *have* been careful. What if you are nervous—we'll run soon. You will be here tomorrow evening, of course. Yes, I want you! No. I'm going to keep my drunken husband—just leave him right in the house. He and Paul can fight it out when I am gone. Yes, he's drunk as a lord at his wedding. They will be two frightfully bewildered men, won't they? Indeed they will. Good-by, beloved. Good-by."

Again I retreated. This time to bed. After dwelling some time on whether or not to warn Paul Holman, the brilliant young naval constructor into whose keeping had been given an important position in the experiments for the control of U-boats, I became very well satisfied with myself in deciding to do nothing of the kind.

III

ON THE next night I was—hypothetically—drunk again. But I did not appear quite so brutish. I had borrowed a razor and a little linen from Jacques, who confided with me that he

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didn't in the least know what Madame was going to do with me; but he was sure that she thought well of me, for she was very careful with her liquor. Jacques visited me several times and never failed to pronounce the wine excellent, though he marveled at my capacity.

Madame had gone out in the limousine for a while in the afternoon, no doubt to expedite arrangements for the hasty departure that was to leave Commander Holman and myself wrangling over our respective identities; and I had used the telephone for a few minutes and arranged for two good men whom I knew to spend the evening within whistling distance of Madame's front porch. But by the time Madame returned, I appeared as drunk as ever plotting wife could wish her husband to be.

Monsieur Alliott came early in the evening, but I had no curiosity as to what he and his wife might be talking of.

But when Commander Holman came in around nine o'clock, I descended the stairs fast enough to hear Madame introducing him to her "brother" who had unexpectedly arrived that very day.

"Have you brought the—the—paper, Paul?" she asked sweetly.

"Yes, Helena." He spoke soberly, like a man who is making the barter of Faust and has scarcely any delusions. "Shall I give it to—to your husband."

"No, Paul. He is drunk as usual. Give it to me and I'll run up and put it where he can find it in the morning. Then I'll come back to you—to you."

The exquisite emphasis of that last word forced his trembling and reluctant hand into his pocket, from which he drew a bulky paper that he handed to her.

Those black eyes of Madame's flamed with triumph while Commander Holman, pale and shaken, looked at the precious blueprint in her slim hand as a soul falling downward might watch the spires of heaven.

It was then that I brushed the portieres gently aside and stepped into the room.

Madame saw me at once. Fright and anger struggled on her face.

"Good evening," I said, pleasantly, to attract the attention of Monsieur and Commander Holman.

Both men wheeled. Monsieur's amused smile was gone; and Holman's pale face blanched to death's pallor as he recognized me—recognized me, not as the drunken husband, but in fact as perhaps the last person on earth whom he wished at that moment to see.

"I have come a little sooner than you expected, Commander?" I asked.

A short embarrassing silence followed. Holman was dazed. Monsieur's face was a study in consternation. Helena spoke first—

"Who are you?"

She recognized me readily enough as her improvised brute of a husband, but she realized at once that I was undoubtedly something more.

"Introduce me, Commander, I said; then glancing toward Monsieur, added: "Monsieur, take your hand out of your pocket or I shall need to use the precaution of shooting first." He removed his hand promptly. "Commander," I went on, "your friends make a practice of changing their names about as rapidly as they change their residence, but it is a privilege—a rare privilege, indeed—at last to meet them. Introduce me."

Madame stared accusingly at Holman. He choked hard and it seemed for a time that he had lost control of his throat, but with effort he said weakly—

"Special Agent Richmond of the Department of Justice—Secret Service."

"Yes, Madame," I explained, "and may I compliment you and Monsieur, your husband, on your clever work as spies. You both have proved very disconcerting." And turning to Holman I said—"Monsieur here is a Frenchman who sees fit to serve another country than his own; but Madame is an accomplished and patriotic lady of Austria."

"Jacques," she hissed at me.

"Is innocent, Madame," I said. At last my star was in the ascendency. "And you have often said, so I have heard, that Yankees have no success without luck in games of wit—such as spy trapping."

"I have been tricked!" she cried indignantly, outraged, but only weakly expressing the fury that was in her.

"You have, Madame," I agreed. "And that blueprint which you are carefully hiding behind you in the hope that I may forget it is merely a bit of paper with which the trap was baited."

Perhaps I did minimize the importance of the paper, but I had much gratification

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in making her believe that she, not Holman, had been the dupe.

She flung the paper angrily to the floor and tears of rage dropped down her cheeks as her eyes blazed at the bewildered Holman. Neither Madame's attitude nor words were very effective, for she was at considerable of a disadvantage, and her sense of humor was utterly gone, for she stormed at Holman for having tricked a woman who trusted him; saying that he was no gentleman, but a sneaking spy—no better than the one that had crept into her house on false pretenses.

She scarcely knew what she was saying, but must needs say something bitter and accusing. Her pride was sadly scorched and shame-ridden, for she was used to having men dance—if need be, to their death—as her slender fingers twitched the strings.

Holman was too bewildered to understand clearly what had happened—yet he seemed another and younger man when he had stepped to the folded blueprint and returned it to his pocket.

Then I asked Holman to step to the door and whistle. He did so, but not without first giving me a strange look of inquiry. The two men who had been waiting in the shadows across the street came in and conducted the protesting Monsieur and wrathfully silent Madame to the limousine where the amazed Jacques was perched. Then they drove away.

Holman looked at me and made several attempts to speak, but choked up and hesitated before he said:

"I don't know how you found out—but I am glad it happened. I am glad! It means ruin for me—but—the plans are safe. But give me a chance, Richmond. Let me go to my quarters—and—and—well, I'll plead guilty, but I'll never be brought to trial."

And by his eyes I knew what he meant: a revolver accidentally discharged—the treason expiated—the honor of the service unsullied.

"Holman," I said, feeling very awkward as I extended my hand reassuringly, "the only reason that woman didn't make a fool of me, too, was because a previous woman—something like her and for motives similar—once did it so completely that I now get Irawadi chills every time I hear one of them say—'If you love me you will do it.'

"The serpent taught the mother of them all that phrase in the Garden of Eden—Adam, even as you and I, learned his lesson; but the Lord wouldn't give him another chance. But, personally, if I had an apple orchard to watch, I would rather put Adam on the job than any man that has been born since. Understand?"

IN THE FRONT-LINE DESKS

BY ELMER FRANKLIN POWELL

I TRIED to be a dough-boy, but they said my feet were flat
And I'd surely never stand the awful strain.
No chance to even argue that I'd like to bet my hat
I could out-walk any tar-heel in the train.

"Awful sorry, but it's useless," was the doctor's mournful wail.
"Your eyesight quite unfits you for the guns."
Uselessly I tried to tell him that at dropping leaden hail
I could surely decimate a pack of Huns.

Then I hoped for aviation, for my nerve is still in place,
But there wasn't even half a chance for that.
A stocky young lieutenant said, "You'll never hold the pace
For you've got a jumpy eyebrow." Think o' that!

So they went and made me captain in the Quartermaster Corps,
Where I juggle lists of beans the livelong day.
Trying hard to grin and bear it as the boys march off to war
While I sit and figure up their blasted pay.

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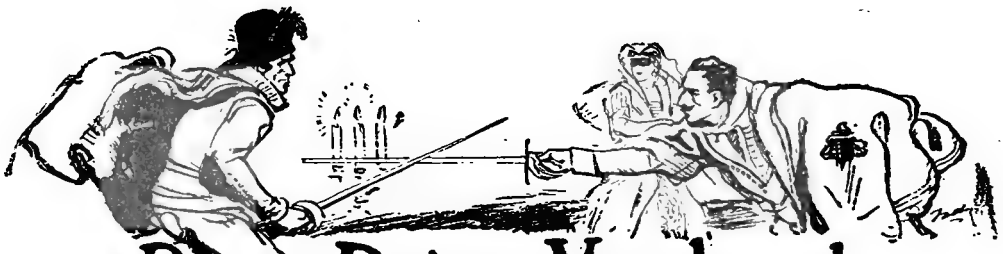

Pierre Dejon-Vagabond

by HIRAM CORNELL FISKE

FOREWORD

It is said that Pierre Dejon was a great rascal, with no good in him for man, woman or child. I have heard that he was a laughing, godless cavalier, with a heavy hand in a quarrel; a wanderer up and down the fair face of France who, it was whispered, sometimes relieved rich travelers of their purses on the highways, mocking them like a merry Villon the while and then scattering gold among the poor with lavish hand.

Such tales of him were still whispered in Arles when I first went there, long after he had gone to his narrow bed in the churchyard, with a sword-thrust through his breast in a quarrel over a wench. Yes, there were many stories, told by the grandchildren of those that had loved him, old men and women of the chimney-corner, living in the past. And of them all I like best the tale of the kiss.

IT WAS on a cold night in the Fall that Pierre Dejon, soldier of the wayside, came to Arles from off the broad highways of France, riding a dun jade he had picked up none knows where and singing as he entered the city gates just as the watch closed them for the night. He broke off his tune when he saw the warders, giving them greeting in a merry voice, laughing and pricking his sorry steed until it set up a pitiful caracole on the cobbles.

The gates grated together behind him and horse and man were off up a side lane to *L'Oie Verte*, an inn where the wine was good and the landlord's daughter pretty. Pierre hallooed loudly at the door, whereupon Maître Herault came out, rubbing his eyes and yawning. He was a very fat man with three chins, bald globe of a head, shaking paunch and a thin mustache of gray, which he permitted to droop at the ends, out of a laziness to curl it.

"*Tiens*, M. Herault," cried Pierre, "you move fast enough for all your fat, when one clinks a sou or two at your gate. Well, how is it with mademoiselle your daughter? She is happy, I trust?"

"Happy? Yes," responded the innkeeper in a dull voice. "She is busy, always busy. Go in and you will find her."

"Ah, yes," said Pierre.

He dismounted, stretched himself and stood looking toward the open door, out of which shot a shaft of ruddy light into the roadway.

"Take care of my nag," he called out over his shoulder. "My Rosinante has carried her Don far today and she must feed well."

Then, thinking better of it, he turned, took the reins from Maître Herault's hand and led the sorry steed himself to the low shed back of the inn that served as a stable. When he had given her hay and oats and seen to bedding her down he strolled again to the door of the inn and stood for a moment listening to the sounds from within.

Voices of men came from a corner of the room, laughing and talking all at once. There was a clatter of dishes, and then the howl of a dog, kicked by one of the company, who set up a cry of delight as the animal fled yelping into the darkness. Pierre went in as the noise died down. Once over the threshold, he paused to look about him.

In front was the fire, leaping and roaring on a great stone hearth. A kettle of soup, swung over it on a crane, made him sniff and step hungrily forward. At his right sat three travelers tossing dice in the corner. On the other side the landlord's daughter busied herself pouring wine for

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the guests. The room was bare as most of its kind and had no other occupants. Maître Herault had gone to the cellar to fetch another bottle of Moselle for the men at dice.

"*Bonsoir, mademoiselle,*" said Pierre, sweeping the floor with the tattered plumes of his hat as he bowed before the host's daughter.

"Ah, monsieur," she said, with a light in her eyes, "you are welcome. Will you have wine?"

He nodded.

"Burgundy," he said. "I shall sit here," indicating a small table in a corner opposite the other guests.

The girl turned to the row of bottles behind her, stealing another glance over her shoulder at him as she did so. Well might she, for Pierre was a handsome rascal in those days, with his black curls, gray eyes and the high color given him by riding long in the wind.

She heard him laugh. Divining something, she faced about quickly. Pierre had leaned forward, and at once, without warning, his arm was about her neck. But she was a buxom lass and tore herself free before he could kiss her, striking him a resounding blow on the cheek that brought the dicers to their feet with a jump.

"So. How dare you?" she cried, her face crimson.

"Ah, mademoiselle," Pierre answered coolly, "one dares many things when lips are red and faces pretty. You were not so shy when last I passed this way."

The men in the corner sat down again, laughing loudly, but too absorbed in their game to take any further interest in the affair.

"I was young then," bridled the girl, "and foolish."

"And now you are old," said Pierre mockingly. "Old and—" He broke off of a sudden. "No, you are not old, nor——"

"It does not matter," she interrupted. "Will you have Burgundy?"

"Ah, well," he said, tossing his head back and looking through half-shut eyes at the ceiling. "It's all one. Today you are kind; tomorrow, scornful; today a kiss, tomorrow a blow. It is the world, the world in little. But of red lips there are many, and—who knows? One day you will see Pierre Dejon flout the serving-maid!"

She brought the wine, pouting. Maître Herault came back from the cellar, a-wheeze after his climb up the steep stairs.

Pierre Dejon drank slowly. Then he ordered a steaming pasty, big as the Holland cheese on the center table. A half hour at this took the edge from his appetite somewhat, and he began a narrow inventory of the guests across the room.

One was a man of middle age, dressed soberly and in good taste, but with a richness that argued him to be of a quality that would usually seek a better place of entertainment than Maître Herault's establishment. He was shaven clean, with a shrewd, deeply-lined face, hard, crafty and eager. His sword he kept by his side, although he had unhooked the belt and laid the sheath on the floor under his chair.

The two others were younger men, dressed more gaily but not less richly than their companion. One was of a high, arrogant carriage, who talked in a loud voice, pulled fiercely at the ends of his waxed mustache and bullied his quieter companion without mercy. This latter had a weak face, laughed vacuously in high-pitched, uncertain tones, and swore as he lost to the others.

The older man seemed less interested in the play than his companions. He raised his head often, as though listening for sounds on the road; and once he walked to the door, opened it softly and looked out.

These men interested Pierre Dejon. He sat long at his table, wondering whether they might be bound for the court of some neighboring prince, to hunt or take part in a grand masque. They did not ask him to join in their game; and after a time he yawned, rose and approached the landlord, who was whispering with his pretty daughter.

"Slack days, Maître," he said. "You will do well to pay the rent."

The host nodded.

"It is true," he replied in his slow way. "But—" he pointed to his guests—"they drink hard. I shall do well tonight."

The younger men were becoming tipsy. They paused in their game to take up a merry stave, but were checked by their companion, who, in a fit of black anger, dashed their upraised glasses to the floor. The young fellows did not take this ill. They fell straightway to swearing and clicking the dice again, with many waggings

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of their heads and beatings of their feet upon the floor.

"Come, come, these are stupid fellows," said Pierre.

He was nettled because the three had recognized in him one whose quality was beneath their own and would have none of him.

"I will go to bed. A candle, Maître, and my room. I am tired."

Maître Herault led the way upstairs. Pierre bowed low, mockingly, to the girl, who made a grimace at him, and followed. Maître Herault led him to a small chamber in the rear, set down the taper, said a slow good-night, and descended the stairs.

"Ah, ho," said Pierre, smiling as he unbelted himself. "One can not always succeed at kissing. But the world is large and the way is long."

Then he sat on the narrow bed for a time, with his head in his hands, thinking of many things; and in particular of where he would be a week or a month or a year hence. It long had been a custom of Pierre's to spend a few moments before sleep in consideration of his future state. This does not mean that he was concerned about the next world; he left such speculation to priests and monks, of whom there were then enough in France to shrive the commonalty in a quarter-hour, he often said, and singe the devil's beard roundly into the bargain.

But tonight he was very tired. Soon he laid his naked sword beside his bed, flung himself down without taking off his clothes, and fell into a deep sleep.

TWO hours later the tread of horses did not disturb him when they stopped before the inn. But he leaped to his feet at the scream of a woman that seemed to come from the room below. For a moment there was silence; Pierre thought he had been dreaming.

The outcry sounded a second time. He caught up his sword, felt to see that his dagger was at his hip, and wrenched the door open. With hands outstretched in the darkness he stumbled down the steep stairway and groped for the lower door. He found it, the latch gave and it fell open.

The fire in the main room of the inn had died to a flicker, but its last rays served still to light the scene before him. In the middle of the floor stood a richly-dressed lady he did not know, masked and carrying a riding-whip, with which she threatened the oldest of the three men Pierre had seen earlier in the evening. This man's hand was at his face, whence the blood streamed where the whip had left its mark.

Behind him lay the younger of his companions, with a dagger-thrust through his breast. Astride the body, with red sword, stood the third, the bully, his blade just withdrawn from the neck of a fellow in rough attire, plainly a man-at-arms, who lay in the death-agony before him.

Pierre stood astonished in the doorway at this new turn of affairs. He saw fat Maître Herault wringing his hands in anguish of spirit far in a corner. The inn-girl crouched there in terror, only her white face showing above the last table. She saw Pierre and her jaw fell. The backs of the others were toward him and they did not know he was there.

"How now, sir?" cried the masked lady. "Your bullies have killed my man, and you must then lay hands upon a defenseless woman. It is well the whip bites! It will teach you that such things may not be."

The older man, for all his coolness, restrained himself with difficulty from a second advance.

"Pah, Gaspard," he cried, "the cat spits! But she will come to terms quickly enough. Madame," addressing her with mock gallantry, "we are still your very humble servants. I repeat, all we ask is that you come quietly with us to the castle of the Comte d'Envers, where you will be entertained by none other than that worthy lord himself. The thing is simple."

"And why should I come?" she asked. "I shall go on to Paris tomorrow. You will do well to allow me."

"We will do well to take you with us, madame. You are alone now, save for your maid, and she lies bound outside. Come to the castle and it will be well for you."

She stood for a moment in thought. Then she turned to the landlord.

"Maître, will you permit this? Must women in your house submit to such indignity?"

Maître Herault did not answer at once. His tones were thick with fear when he spoke.

"I can not help it," he said. "I too am in their power. I am ruined!"

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"Poor worm!" she cried. "You are a miserable coward. And this man——"

She turned to Gaspard, the bully, who had dropped his point and stood at rest.

"Are you, too, determined that I shall go to the castle?"

"Ah, as for that," he answered, "you have heard—" with a wave of his hand at his companion. "Your lackey fought well; he has taken the life out of this poor gull," touching with his foot the young man on the floor, who lay stark.

"Madame, you must come with us," he went on in feigned courtesy, with a bow.

Then he turned to the other, who was wiping the blood from his face.

"Shall we close with the spitfire, Riccardo?" he asked.

"Wait," replied Riccardo. "She scratches too well. I will not use force again unless I must. We shall hear from it if we do her harm. Madame, you must come with us. We are two, and you have no one to defend you. I urge you to come without resistance."

"And this is France!" she cried. "And a woman can not travel without insult!"

Her eyes flamed scorn through the mask.

"Bravos and bullies, what do you want? Is it gold? Here is my purse!" She flung a bag of coins at their feet. "I have no more to give!"

"St. Jean, what spirit!" cried Gaspard. "I could love this wench if she were not loose."

"I!" Her tone was full of amazement as of scorn. "I a—a——"

She gasped with astonishment. Then she grasped the whip tight and lashed him full in the face, as she had the other.

"*Sacrebleu!*" he cried. "This passes bearing!"

The two were upon her in a breath, grasping her roughly by both wrists, while she resisted as best she could.

Then it was that Pierre Dejon sprang from the doorway where he had stood. He could not at once use his sword without harm to the lady; but his appearance was unexpected, and he caught Riccardo a buffet on the temple that knocked out his senses, felling him like an ox. Gaspard, surprised, loosed his hold on the lady, recovered his sword and stood on guard.

Pierre had fallen back, his hand numb with the blow he had delivered. At once he advanced with caution and the two blades met. The lady shrank back into the chimney-corner; they were left free in the middle of the room, save for the men who lay underfoot. Each was wary, feeling out the skill of the other.

Then Pierre led the attack fiercely, wishing to end the matter before Riccardo might come again into his senses. Gaspard was no mean swordsman and met him with firm wrist and keen eye. The fire was their only light. Its red gleam ran up and down the grinding blades like serpents' tongues. There was no sound save the grate of steel on steel and the quick breathing of the men.

At length Pierre slipped in the blood on the floor and fell to one knee. The lady gasped, and there was a low cry from the girl in the corner. Gaspard lunged shrewdly. His point pierced Pierre's right shoulder, and the thin steel snapped as the other started with the pain.

Gaspard drew back again while his adversary knelt, stung with the hurt; but his blade did not enter upon a second thrust, for the point was gone. He threw it aside with a curse, reaching for his dagger. Pierre drew his dirk from his belt with his left hand. His right arm was useless, and the sword had fallen beyond his reach. They struck together, but this time it was Pierre who was lucky. The fire, at his back, dazzled Gaspard. Pierre's blade sank to the heart. Gaspard sprawled on the floor with the others. His breath went out almost at once.

Pierre turned with joy in his eyes.

"Madame," he said, bowing to the lady in the mask, "the gentlemen will not take you to the castle tonight. They have quite other business. I think two of them have gone on a long journey to a far country that I, happily, know nothing about. I give you back your freedom, madame. Is it not a rare gift, when one seems to have lost it?"

"Ah, you are brave," cried the lady.

She withdrew her eyes with a shudder from Gaspard, came to Pierre and put her hand lightly upon the sleeve of his doublet.

"You are sorely wounded. I must bind up your shoulder. Lie down."

SHE reached for her kerchief and began to tear it into long strips. Then there came a sound of horsemen on the road and a company of cavaliers drew rein at the door. The landlord, out

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of one fear into another, threw it open and a young man in a dark cloak rushed into the room.

"Heaven be thanked I have found you, Eulalie!" he cried, embracing the lady in the mask. "You were foolish to go on alone. What—" as he caught sight of the bodies on the floor—"what is this? Who has done this?"

"Some cavaliers," she explained, "mistook me for a certain woman of the street. I was to be carried to the castle of their lord, for his good pleasure. Is it not an adventure?"

She laughed, with a quaver in her voice. But the young man cried out in wrath—

"Here, Jules, Henri, Maturin; come and secure me these rascals!"

Then, turning to her:

"How did you escape them? Who is this fellow?"

She was busied binding up Pierre's wound.

"It is he who saved me, my brother," she said. "But is it not an adventure! I see what one must do. One must forget that one is a princess royal and flee the palace, leaving one's brother angry, oh, so angry, and seek adventure. That is the way!"

She tore the mask from her face. Pierre gasped at her beauty.

"You are a princess?" he asked slowly.

"Why not?"

She laughed. Then she turned gaily to her brother; but he was kneeling beside Riccardo, who was coming again into his senses.

"Yes, I am a princess. And you?"

"I?" He smiled. "I am a vagabond. The world is between us."

"Ah!" Her eyes softened. "That is but scant praise for yourself. You are a brave man, and you have saved me from——"

She shuddered and did not go on.

"It is nothing," he said.

"It is much. I can not tell you how much, for I can not repay you in due measure. What do you desire? Lands? Money? Tell me."

He shook his head. There are chroniclers who say that Pierre held in his high heart much of pride; and there are others who say it was only some whimsy of the mind that held him silent, or a stiffness of the neck that men call perversity. She thought he was hurt.

"Ah, forgive me," she said.

For a moment she pondered. Then he saw her eyes alight and the swift crimson rush over her face.

"See," she said softly. "I will give you that which no man has had before of me."

With a quick movement she bent over him where he lay, and he felt the faint touch of her lips on his forehead. Then she arose in confusion as her brother turned away from the wounded man.

"I shall have the fellow brought with us," he said. "The lout will hang well, when he is whole again. And this man—he saved you?"

She nodded.

"He is my friend. You must leave him to me. I shall reward him."

"Let him enter my service," said the prince. "There is always a chance for a bold fellow."

Pierre shook his head.

"I am a vagabond," he said. "I must rove no man knows where, once the fit is upon me. I can not serve any master."

The prince looked at him kindly.

"Perhaps others of us would be vagabonds, if we could," he said. "You are a *man*."

So they left Pierre at the inn, with a great purse to pay his lodging so long as he might remain. But a week later, when the princess sent one of her men to ask concerning his health, it was found that he was gone, with his wound scarce healed, and none knew whither.

But as he left he mocked the maître's daughter, saying—

"Ha, hussy, you who would keep your lips from me, do I not know what it is to have the kiss of a princess?"

For he was made of a queer stuff, this Pierre Dejon.

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Will of the Wasp

by HUGH S. MILLER

Author of "Percival the Terrible," "Mr. Hobbs," etc.

HE JOINED in Sydney. Captain Lacasse had just concluded a soliloquy on the luck that seemed bent on sending him to sea short-handed, and was in the act of ordering the crew to cast off, when he dropped soundlessly from the stone quay to the deck and made his way aft.

His ill-fitting clothes, streaked with dust, the tan of his skin, and the stockman's wide-brimmed felt hat, spotted with perspiration, denoted the station hand who had grown sick of the sun and drought of the back-blocks and footed it to the coast. He was about twenty years old, slight of build and alert and boyish of face, with eyes that were quick and sensitive.

"This the *Wasp*?" he inquired, pleasantly.

Captain Lacasse frowned. It had not escaped his notice that the face had lines of sophistication which do not properly belong to youth, and his disposition was to make mention of the fact. But he was short a man, and late getting away. For one of the few times in his life, he restrained himself.

"It is," he said, curtly.

"Bull & David's schooner?"

"Yes."

"Captain Lacasse?"

"Yes. Anything else?"

The eyes wavered.

"No, sir! I want to ship."

"Your name?" Captain Lacasse demanded.

"Will, sir."

"Will what?"

The other smiled slightly.

"Why, that's all, I reckon. Just Will."

The face of the captain, or the part of it visible above his white beard, took on a mahogany color, and his china blue eyes flashed.

"Will *what?*"

The boy looked up at him uneasily, and decided to amend his answer.

"Will—Will Smith, sir!"

Captain Lacasse glared.

"Take yourself forward!" he snapped. And as the boy obeyed, he shrugged his shoulders. "Driftwood," he said. "A good for nothing waster. And impudent," he added. "He must be cured of that."

The remark being addressed to me, the mate of the *Wasp*, I answered it.

"He's a weakling. That kind always tries to show off. He hasn't the spunk of a lizard."

The *Wasp* was a two-masted schooner in the island trade, of which Captain Lacasse had been master for the ten years his firm had owned her. Seventy years old he was, and for forty of them had been sailing the South Pacific. A long time, it might seem to some, for a man to travel the same path, but not for Captain Lacasse, the reason being that he felt he had a duty to perform which kept him there, and half the world—the half that lived south of the line and knew him, and knew his story—agreed with him.

The story was not a happy one, but it can be told briefly. Years before, his young wife, just out from France, had died in Tahiti, leaving him the sole responsibility of bringing up the baby, Clairette. This he

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managed commendably until the girl was eighteen, at which time, being in a boarding-school in Brisbane and away from his care, she so far forgot his counsel as to run off and marry a young society drunkard known as "Dazzling Bob" Mathias.

When her father learned of it, he nearly throttled Dazzling Bob and told her to choose between father and husband, an ultimatum she promptly and proudly answered by clinging to the latter. Thereupon the captain stormed out of the place, swearing he would have nothing more to do with her.

The marriage, unhappily, turned out as bad as could be expected. Dazzling Bob was caught in a dishonest mining deal and to escape punishment fled to the Santa Cruz Islands, taking Clairette. For several years fragments of news trickled through to the father's ears, enough to tell him the poverty in which Clairette was living; but such was his anger, he would not go to her.

"She is no longer mine!" he said, sternly, each time word came to him. And he grew so bitter that by and by men dared not even tell him when they heard of her.

Then one sunny morning he came to Tongoa Island, where there was a mission in charge of a devout and earnest man. And when he landed, the missionary said—

"I have news for you, my friend."

He led the captain to the house, and to a bed on which lay a white baby about a year old, attended by a native woman.

"It was not more than a month ago," the missionary said, "that Tamu, my servant, found this baby on a mat on the veranda, and pinned to its dress was a note in a woman's writing. Here is the note."

He handed the captain a leaf from a note-book on which, at the top, was written,

For Captain Lacasse.

And below:

FATHER—

I am leaving Virginie, your granddaughter, with the prayer that you will take her out of this. The boy can better endure it. CLAIRETTE.

The missionary left the room and closed the door, for Captain Lacasse, having read the note and gazed at the baby, which smiled up at him, had suddenly collapsed to his knees, and with face buried in the pillow was shaking with great sobs he could not restrain.

The change in him dated from that moment. For when he rose to his feet and took the baby in his arms to convey it to the ship, he knew, as well as a man can know, that he had been wrong—grievously, cruelly wrong. And the knowledge hurt more than anything he had ever imagined. So he set out desperately to find his daughter.

But the ocean is wide, men had long ceased talking of her, news travels slowly where it is passed on only at chance meetings, and trading schooners have trade to attend to. Not a trace of her had he found. Now, at an age when most men have laid aside their tasks, he still was seeking her.

In appearance he was big, straight, and strong for all his many years; in character austere but just, strict in his ideas of right and stern in their enforcement. Especially was he against drink and the men who use it. On this subject he was notoriously intolerant, and could be severe to the point of brutality with any of his crew who overlooked the fact.

Virginie was seventeen, as sweet as she was beautiful, and, so he said, daily looking more like her mother. For those of us who never had seen her mother, it was hard to believe there had been another as lovely as this brown-eyed slip of a girl.

Although her life had been spent at sea, her grandfather refusing to leave her ashore, she had been given an education through an arrangement with the Sydney schools, and appeared not to suffer for want of the advantages to be had on land; nevertheless it had sometimes occurred to me that it was doing her a grave injustice to keep her in such surroundings and deprive her so completely of the company of young people. She was acquainted, perhaps, with half a dozen boys and girls her own age, but these were scattered from Dunedin to Cooktown, and she seldom saw them.

It had been only the day before that I had spoken to her grandfather on this very subject.

"You are right," he replied, thoughtfully. "I can not leave her ashore by herself, and I am an old man to be following the sea. Perhaps—after this voyage——"

"You mean—give it up?" I said.

He nodded, slowly.

"The search?" I went on, hardly believing my ears.

There was sadness beyond words in the

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expression which gathered on his face.

"I have thought it over carefully," he said, after a short silence. "She is entering now on the most wonderful years of her life; it would not be right for her to spend them in a search which already——"

He paused and gazed with unseeing eyes across the water; then recalled himself and resumed—

"Which already has been carried on so long without success. It was for me to decide if the chance of finding her mother is good enough to outweigh the certain loss of these years. And I have at last decided. If we get no news on this voyage it will be the end of our effort; she will never recover her mother."

"Or her brother," I suggested.

"Or her brother. But that will be small loss," he added, bitterly. "Like father; like son. With such a parent, he was doomed."

"Still——"

He turned on me with one of his sudden flares of temper.

"I tell you, I don't want to discuss him. And what is more, I don't want her ever to see him. It would have been a merciful thing if he had never been born. I hope to Heaven he is dead!"

As he turned away angrily, I inquired—

"Have you told her you are quitting the search?"

"No; but I shall."

And after supper he did. Virginie passed me later, and in the glimpse I had of her face she looked very serious, almost appalled.

THE next day, as we slipped down the harbor, she leaned against the rail, gravely contemplating the receding city.

We were almost up to the Heads, with the ocean open before us, when I happened to glance along the deck, and discovered the newcomer in the crew staring at Virginie, who was entirely unconscious of his gaze. If there was one thing more than another forbidden on the *Wasp*, it was that members of the crew manifest any interest whatever in the captain's pretty granddaughter; so I went for him. He did not see me until I was almost on him, and then he turned pale. I swung him around the corner of the deckhouse, out of Virginie's sight.

"So long as you are on this vessel," I said, "you will keep your eyes to yourself. If you don't, somebody is likely to darken them for you. Savvy?"

He looked at me nervously.

"Yes," he said.

A stray current of wind blew open his unbuttoned coat, and something heavy in his breast pocket hit my hand, which was still holding his arm.

"There's a familiar feel to that," I said. "Let's have it!"

Reaching in, I found what I expected, a flask of liquor.

"Not here, you don't," I said, tossing it over the side.

He showed a bit of spirit when he saw what I was doing, and caught at my arm to stop me, so for that I hit him a clip on the jaw.

"This is a temperance ship," I said, as I let him have it.

It was not a hard blow, by any means, but he was light, whereas I am a big man, physically, and he went down.

The next moment Virginie, attracted by the commotion, appeared on the scene. She gave one look at me and the boy.

"Oh!" she gasped.

"He isn't hurt," I assured her. "Get up, you!" I said to the boy.

Without delaying for a second invitation he scrambled to his feet and hurried off.

Virginie waited until he was out of hearing.

"Why did you hit him?" she demanded.

"Curiosity once killed a cat," I suggested.

"You are so much bigger than he is, aren't you?" she retorted, insinuatingly.

"If I hadn't been, I wouldn't have hit him," said I.

The incident passed off without further comment, or reaching the ears of Captain Lacasse. I thought I had initiated the youngster into the way things were run on the *Wasp* so there would be no trouble from his direction, but in this I was mistaken. Inside of a week my calculations were upset with a bump.

The night was clear and warm, with just enough breeze to shove us along at a six-knot gait. On the ship everything was still, except for an occasional creak of a block or the rattle of hoops on the booms. Virginie had been reading in the cabin, and coming out for the air, was gazing over the sea, black and heaving in the path of light from a young moon.

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Suddenly there was a racket forward, and the familiar figure of Captain Lacasse passed through the yellow gleam from the open door of the deck-house amidships, striding rapidly aft, with one hand half-carrying, half-dragging the boy. In front of me he released his burden and let it drop to the deck like a rag dummy.

"Look at that! Look at that!" he stormed. "Drunk!"

"Very," I said, and becoming aware of Virginie's approach, added for her benefit, "I told you he was no good."

The captain then started on a tirade against drink that would have made a paid orator for the cause sky-blue with envy; and by way of impressing Virginie with the full extent of the youth's wickedness, I supplemented his statements from time to time with a word or two. But the effect was not appreciable.

Her voice, when she interrupted us, was thoroughly cool and composed.

"He is a mere boy," she said, "and a victim of habit. Perhaps he could break it if you were to help him."

"Not he," said I, "he is a weak one."

"Yes," said Captain Lacasse. "He is weak."

"He is weak," echoed Virginie, scornfully, "therefore—crush him!"

"This is not a reform school," said her grandfather, sternly. "If a man has anything in him, he can break a habit; if he hasn't, he might as well be dead. Gutter-snipe!" he exclaimed, stirring the figure with his foot. Then, turning to me: "See if you can find if he has any more drink, and destroy it. To that extent we shall help him break his habit. And tomorrow, when he would like to sit and hold his head, mind that he gets no time to rest. In that way, also," he declared, grimly, "we shall help him."

I took the youngster by the collar and dragged him along the deck without ceremony, leaving Virginie gazing after me silently but, no doubt, with thoughts she would have liked to express. Under the pillow in his bunk was a bottle, almost empty, which I threw away. Then I tumbled him in and left him to sleep it off.

The next day the captain himself undertook to see that he should not forget his lesson. From early in the morning to dark he drove him relentlessly. Something of what the boy was going through showed on his face, which was sickly white and twitched from time to time as if it was all he could do to hold back the tears. To make it harder for him, about noon the weather began to thicken, and all afternoon we were in a cold drizzle which kept him soaking wet and shivering. That night he had chills, and when another day broke, was ill enough to give us cause to worry.

By mid-afternoon he was worse, if anything, and when Virginie proposed that he be moved to the spare cabin where she could nurse him—having no idea, I think, the suggestion would be followed—Captain Lacasse agreed, and the transfer was made.

As night came on, his fever rose. We had no way of judging his temperature, our medical equipment being limited, but his skin was burning hot, and he was muttering constantly a string of unintelligible words. So Virginie insisted on sitting up with him, and her grandfather, after a few perfunctory objections, gave in to her.

During the first watch the wind freshened, and when I appeared at midnight the *Wasp* was racing with long black rollers from astern, which caught up with her, passed her with a boiling of foam level with her deck, and tore on into the thick darkness ahead with a rush and roar.

I was so busy with the ship I had little opportunity to see how Virginie was getting on. The first time I looked in she was putting wet cloths on the boy's head. The second glimpse I took on the run, coming back from a dash forward to put an extra lashing on the starboard lifeboat. The boy was talking excitedly, and Virginie was bending over him, trying to soothe him.

An hour later, during a lull in the storm, I went back. To my surprise, Virginie looked as if she had been crying.

"Frightened?" I asked.

"No—not frightened," she said, softly. "See—" she pointed to the boy—"he is better, isn't he? Look!"

I did, and nodded. And then he opened his eyes and smiled at us.

"I'm better," he said, weakly.

"You look it," I replied.

"Thanks!" he murmured.

"Thank Miss Virginie. It isn't every sick sailor has such a nurse."

His hand moved over and caught hers.

"I do," he said.

And in his eyes burned a quick light of

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gratitude that was a little—just a little, I thought—too pronounced. But then he wrenched his eyes from her face and it disappeared.

I turned to her.

"And as for you," I said in a low tone, "it's a very tender-hearted nurse that cries with relief because her patient improves! Is it," I asked, jestingly, "that she is tired?"

A flood of color swept her face.

"I am not tired."

"But it is nearly four o'clock."

She shook her head and smiled.

"I am not tired."

I opened the door. The light poured across the deck, glinted on the top of a moving hill of water, and expired as a gust of wind tore the door from my hand and slammed it shut behind me.

"It would be a rum go," I said to myself, "if after all the old man's pains, and under his very eye, she should take a fancy to a young scalawag like that."

And having just seen how solicitous she was about him, there was a moment in which it did not seem impossible.

The weather and the boy both mended rapidly. By the following night the wind was down to a ten-knot breeze, and the sea was comparatively smooth. The boy was up for a short time and ate some broth and other dainties which, from their appearance, had not been prepared by the clumsy hands of the West Indian cook; and Captain Lacasse decided he was well enough to go back to his own quarters.

In time we raised Kandavu of the Fiji group, to the islands of which this last cruise of Captain Lacasse was to be confined, and after a week sailed on to Ngau and Taviuni. In all this period we had had no difficulty with the boy. He was, in fact, a model sailor, orderly and well-behaved except when he got off on a spree such as he had done the once. He kept his place, never seeming to notice Virginie beyond returning her greeting when she spoke to him. On these occasions his eyes simply met hers and passed on. I know all this, because I watched him closely.

For her part, Virginie was outwardly just as reserved; but sometimes when she thought she was alone she would let her book fall in her lap, and an abstracted look would come into her eyes which was like nothing I had ever seen there.

Captain Lacasse grew quieter and more serious as the final search for his daughter progressed. In port he devoted himself entirely to making inquiries, leaving the business of the ship in my hands; but not a person could he find who had ever heard of Dazzling Bob or Clairette.

A MONTH went by without event; and then we came to a night off the coast of Lakemba.

The sun, setting red, had left behind a rosy twilight which darkened almost imperceptibly until the slowly heaving sea, green before, became mellow purple shot here and there with paths of dull orange, on which the ship floated silent as a phantom; then the purple melted into black, and the stars emerged.

They came in companies, as though mighty invisible hands were lifting off immense sections of their coverings, revealing them, freshly sparkling, clustered in their crowded beds. From the garden islands which encircled us came breaths of fragrance, of flowers and land-sweetness—faint wisps of breeze that hardly stirred the lazy sails.

It was so still and beautiful I began to resent, as inharmonious and inappropriate, the breathing of some one asleep clear at the other end of the ship, which came back to me with irritating persistency. I tried not to think of it, but had no success; there was something about it that was inescapable. Finally, in desperation, I went forward to see if anything could be done—and discovered it came from none other than the boy.

He lay sprawled on deck, right up in the bow, face to the sky and mouth open, drunk and dead to the world.

Captain Lacasse was standing by the rail and smoking his pipe, when I returned.

"The lad's drunk again!" I said.

From the other side of him came an exclamation, partly suppressed, which told me that Virginie, invisible in the dark, had heard me.

Without a word, he emptied his pipe and strode forward, I following him. Behind me was a soft patter of steps, and when we stopped, there was a shadow at my side, a little darker than the rest.

"Pass me a bucket," said Captain Lacasse.

He filled it over the side; then let the boy have it all in the chest and face.

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"Get up, you brat!" he said; but the boy merely turned over.

The captain gave him another—and another—before he showed signs of waking. Then he sat up, streaming wet, in a puddle of water like ink on the deck.

"I'm all right," he said, thickly.

Captain Lacasse gave him a bucketful while he had his mouth open, nearly strangling him; but still he was not sober enough to know where he was.

"The next time, my dear fellow," he said with maudlin politeness, "put a little strawberry in it."

"My dear fellow," replied the captain, boiling mad, "try this one."

And with that he gave him the contents of a bucket so hard it knocked him over and bumped his head sharply on the deck, at which the shadow beside me caught its breath. The boy lay still a moment, then struggled slowly back to a sitting position and as if speaking to himself, but clear and distinct, so all of us heard it, said gravely—

"Drunk again!"

Captain Lacasse reached down and lifted him to his feet, holding him as he would a cat.

"You young sot!" he said, "if I could do what is in my mind, I would throw you over the side like a pail of slops." Then to me he said, "Take him! I am afraid of myself. And look for the liquor. For I swear it will not be good for him or the name of Stephen Lacasse if I see him drunk again on my ship."

So once more I took the youngster by the neck and conveyed him to his quarters. I made him empty his bunk and bag, and probed every cranny in the place, but all to no purpose; I found nothing. As the effect of the drink wore off, his sullenness gave way to dejection which he diffused unconsciously until I had all I wanted; so I got rid of him, telling him that the next day we would hunt through the ship inch by inch from end to end to find what he had hidden.

Virginie met me and asked if I had found it.

"Let me talk with him," she suggested.

"I don't—" I began.

"Please do!"

I hesitated, and in that moment she had gone.

In a quarter of an hour she reappeared.

"It is all right now," she said. "He has thrown it overboard."

"All of it?" I asked.

"Every drop. There was only one bottle. It was in the cook's coal box."

"You heard your grandfather," I reminded her. "There will be trouble if the boy drinks again."

"He gave me his word of honor. And I believe him," she added, sincerely. "I don't think I should doubt him, if I were you," she said. "He needs to be trusted, not doubted."

Then she left me.

At half-past one in the morning, when the ship and sea both were so still I could have heard a spider crawl, a faint sound, like that of a bare foot on deck, came to me. There was nothing unusual about it, I paid no attention to it. But in a few minutes I heard something else, of such a character and so unexpected that I was instantly aroused. From out in the dark had come the unmistakable choking gasp of some one drowning. I slipped off my shoes and went over the side.

At about fifty yards I heard another gasp almost in my ear, and with a couple of strokes to the right found what I was seeking. It was the boy. I towed him back to the ship, hauled him on deck, emptied some of the water out of him, and then asked what under the Southern Cross he meant by going in when he couldn't swim.

"I can swim," he said, dully.

Up to this point I had supposed that finding it hard to get to sleep, he had gone in for a dip and lost his head, but now the truth dawned on me.

"Oh, I see," I said, "I interrupted something."

He was sitting on the tarpaulined hatch, sagged down with his elbows on his knees, like an old man.

"Yes," he murmured.

"You can't blame me for it," I said, not without sarcasm. "I didn't know who it was."

There was a pause, then,

"It's great," he flashed, bitterly, "to hear that!"

"You don't seem to care a lot."

"I know what you mean."

He stared thoughtfully straight ahead over the ship's side, into the dark from which I had just brought him, his white

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shirt and trousers, wet and clinging, outlining his slender figure with a chalky effect that gave it the appearance of a plaster model.

"You could begin," I said, "by showing you have some backbone. Just at present there's no one—the old man, especially—that thinks you have."

"Yes," he said, softly, "there is."

"I forgot," I said. "But she happens to be the only one. And the wise thing for you is to put her out of your mind. For if her grandfather thought she gave a whoop about you, he would be apt to pull your head out by the roots. I happen to know," I said, "some of his private thoughts."

"I have tried to stop drinking. I did everything I could think of; but I can't do it. And I'm sick of trying—sick of everything." After a moment—"You were right. I haven't the backbone of a worm."

"That's no way to talk."

He went on.

"It's hard for any man; but it seems impossible for me. I fail in everything. Tonight I felt so rotten I couldn't go to sleep, so to cheer myself up I went back and tried to think of something I had ever started that I put through; but I couldn't do it. I don't suppose there's another man in the world who couldn't have thought of a lot of things."

"Most of us have sense enough not to try," said I.

"I think if there was something I could look back at, and say to myself, 'I did that—and it took strength to do it,' I would have the grit to do anything. I would keep my mind on that one thing and make the thought of it carry me over another—and so on. But when there isn't anything, when I know I'm no good and everybody else knows it—and sees that I don't forget it; then it's more than I can do, that's all."

"I see your point," I said.

"This was the first time I ever went so far as to try what I did tonight. But I had been doing my level best and thought that at last I was through with the stuff for good. When I came to on the deck last night and saw you and Captain Lacasse and—and Miss Virginie watching me, and realized I had gone all the way back, I—" he paused—"I felt very bad," he concluded, slowly.

"Yes," I said.

He got up to go.

"I should like to show them I can do it, but I don't know how," he said, gloomily. "I should like it very much," he added, as he moved away.

I did not tell Captain Lacasse or Virginie of any of this, because I thought that the less said of it, the better it would be for everybody.

WE FINISHED our trading on Lakemba, moved on to Kambara and did the little that was to be done there, and then, three weeks from the night I pulled the lad out of the sea, dropped anchor off Fulanga in what, for want of a better name, was called a bay, but which, like so many in the islands, was only a crescent-shaped indentation in the coast.

Half-submerged ledges of coral hovered off the opening, and a reef, an evil-looking thing when the rollers were chasing each other in, lay along the side of the bay. We came in at nine o'clock on a light breeze from the northeast, with the sky clear, the glass steady, and every reason to expect a fair night.

Within half an hour the breeze died away, and the night became heavy, oppressively hot, and ominously still. A dog in the village barked, a baby cried, a woman laughed—we heard them all. At once we let go our other anchor and double-lashed everything movable.

About ten o'clock thick, black clouds, rumbling with thunder, appeared in the southeast and began swiftly to mount the sky. There was a puff of wind; a few heavy drops of warm rain spattered on us; then a pelting flood came down.

The full force of the hurricane hit us suddenly in a terrific blast as though it had blown away the lines which held it. About us was a leaping, roaring blackness with a steady deluge of rain and spray that whipped like countless lashes and stung the little *Wasp* to madness. One moment she buried her bows beneath a mass of water and rolled and pawed to free them from the bridle of the anchor chains; the next she reared back with head high in the air and tugged in terror to break away.

The men hung on wherever they could obtain a hold, and Captain Lacasse and I, drenched, clung to the pin-rail around the mainmast. Virginie was in the cabin,

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buried in a big chair fastened solidly to the floor.

Overhead, so close it seemed at our very ears, the thunder kept up a constant crashing, and at frequent intervals blinding flashes of lightning illuminated the ship and boiling sea with a ghostly light in which the masts and every rope, glistening wet, stood out in vivid detail through a curtain of hissing rain. It was then, if we turned, we could see a field of white where the waves, in a last burst of frenzy, were quarreling savagely on the fringe of reef that lined the shore—perilously close.

The port anchor was the first to go, a cross sea of extraordinary size getting under the *Wasp* and throwing her the length of her chain with a force that snapped it like a piece of string. We had the sensation of being taken up bodily and carried laterally with incredible swiftness; then there was a frightful shock which nearly tore our hands from their grasp; a sickening jerk at the instant of the break, and the ship rolled away with wild abandon until brought up by the starboard anchor. It was now only a question of minutes until it, too, should give way. When it did, only a miracle could save us.

Captain Lacasse touched me on the arm and led the way to the cabin, where Virginie welcomed us with a brave smile.

"We can do nothing out there," he said, when I had shut the door. "It is time now to pray."

Thereupon he bared his head and offered up a simple prayer for the safety of the vessel and all on board; and hardly had he finished when there came a succession of feeble tremors the length of the ship which testified to the truth of his words. It was, indeed, time to pray. The starboard anchor, the only thing that held us, was dragging.

With the movement of the ship, sometimes slow, sometimes fast, but always in the direction the rollers were traveling, fewer big ones broke over her, and it was possible to move about on deck. At a word from Captain Lacasse, who was fastening a life preserver on Virginie, I went to look for the men.

One was gone, swept away just before the port anchor let go, but the rest were safe, and I advised them to take shelter in the main cabin, which was very strongly built, and as stanch as any part of the vessel's structure. Some preferred to stay in the open, but several went to the cabin, among them the boy.

I waited long enough to see, by the aid of a flash of lightning, that the white fangs of the reef were nearer, and then stepped inside. And coming thus from the dark into the light, I took in the whole picture of the room at a glance, in such a way that I have retained it with the utmost vividness.

The dominating figure was, of course, Captain Lacasse, tall, erect, with white beard and stern, brave face, his arm about Virginie, who leaned affectionately against him. Across the room, facing them, were three of the crew side by side against the wall, with a fourth an arm's length away, so that he stood out by himself. This was the boy.

His white shirt and trousers, sopping wet, stuck to his body and legs as if glued, and dripped water silently to two little pools in which his bare feet, well apart, were planted. The palms of his hands were turned flat against the wall, and because of the tension of his body, in which they shared, appeared to cling to the flat surface behind him like tendrils of a hardy plant.

His face was singularly white, even in the uncertain light of the oil lamp, and, just as I had seen once before, he was gazing at Virginie with an intentness which made him completely oblivious to the rest of us, to the storm, even, I fancy, to the imminence of death. And Virginie, also pale and tense, yet with her lips parted in a smile of confidence and courage, was gazing back at him.

The crash came quickly. The ship rose with a curiously slow, deadly movement, balanced tremblingly an instant, then flew through the air; and almost in the next second stopped with a terrific shock. Apart from the rending of timbers and the thump and battering of the surf both on the ship and the reef, there was a confusion of sound from which emerged certain individual noises, such as the rattle of the lamp, the falling of heavy drawers from the captain's desk in the next cabin, the splintering of water bottles on the floor, and, faintly, a shout from one of the crew outside.

In the same moment Captain Lacasse and Virginie inclined back against the wall as if drawn by a giant magnet, while the four men, with the uniformity of mechanical

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toys, trotted forward involuntarily a few short, rapid steps and bent over the table as if bowing to their commander and his granddaughter across the room.

We gathered outside in the shelter of the deckhouse. The ship had struck stern first high on the reef and lay firmly fastened, but tilted slightly toward the open sea, so that the waves broke easily over the deck. Most of the time we were knee deep in water, but occasionally, when an unusually heavy sea arrived, it rose to our waists.

The starboard bulwarks, likewise the boat on the starboard davits, were smashed to kindling directly after we struck, and pieces of wreckage, carried by the flood about our feet, hit and bruised us. It was still raining, but not so hard as before, and the thunder kept up a constant dull growl.

From time to time a flash of lightning enabled us to make out the land about a hundred yards away, trees bent by the wind and deserted beach weird and unreal in the ghostly night; but between us and the land was a white, seething mass of water. We burned red flares to summon help, though we knew well enough the natives could do nothing for us until the sea subsided.

It was apparent the ship would not last long, and anything we were going to do had better be done quickly; so Captain Lacasse called for a volunteer to try to take a line ashore.

There was not one of us who did not hear him, and we were men who had gambled with death many, many years, as men do who sail those seas, but because to all of us there seemed not the slightest possibility of living through that surf, there was no response. We continued to stare toward the shore as if hypnotized.

Then in a beam of light from the lamp in the cabin, still burning bravely, I saw Virginie slowly turn her head and gaze into the white and anxious face of the boy.

He stood behind her, looking past her to the spot where, at intervals, lightning disclosed the beach dotted now with a few black figures struggling to stand against the wind, and did not become aware, at once, that she was gazing at him. Then he felt, rather than saw, her eyes upon him, and with the realization, a visible change took place in him. He straightened up. His breathing quickened.

Most of all, something came into his face to supplant the anxiety and strain that had been there so long. It came slowly, and its character was not apparent until it had developed to its full power. Then it revealed itself as pride—new-found and unconquerable. He looked at her swiftly, and smiled. She smiled, too, but it was a more wonderful smile than his. It was of pride and love and suffering combined, such as only a woman can give.

Then in a clear voice he spoke.

"Here!" he cried.

We brought down the signal halyards and made one end fast to a stout line. To prevent the thin rope cutting him, we made him a belt of a strip of canvas, to which we tied it.

AS HE moved to the side of the vessel, Captain Lacasse preceding and I following him, he paused before Virginie. Over his shoulder I saw her face, suffused with a great tenderness. He put out his hands to take hers; but instead of giving them to him, she reached up and pulled his head down. And in the dark she kissed him lingeringly on the lips while the rain streamed down their faces.

He jumped into the water as a streak of lightning shot across the sky, flooding everything with an intense, dazzling light. For that second his white, ghostly figure seemed to be poised in mid-air, in the very mesh of a screen of rain like countless parallel lines of fine silver wire tightly stretched, and directly above a multitude of snarling waves waiting hungrily with faces and claws upturned; then the light expired and darkness dropped with instantaneous suddenness.

Captain Lacasse paid out the line, while the rest of us gathered about him. At each flash we leaned forward together as if on a string set in motion by the lightning, and stared at the thin rope which swept down to the water. Not a word was spoken. Sometimes the line went briskly for a few yards, and our hearts leaped with hope; and again it would hang heavy and still for what seemed interminable periods.

Throughout it all Virginie, clinging to the shrouds, unminding the swirl of the water about her feet, stood motionless, gazing in the direction the boy had gone, her lips moving rapidly.

There came at last a shout from Captain Lacasse. The rope was sliding from his hands. Presently it stopped, and we were

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breathless with suspense. Then, to our intense joy, it began to move again, this time with the swinging succession of jerks that told us human hands were pulling it. Every man of us cheered; but probably the happiest was Virginie, who simply looked the way she felt.

The captain said I should go first, to carry a light line by which, with an improvised breeches buoy, Virginie could be taken off with safety. So with this fastened to me, I went down hand over hand, and more dead than alive, eventually reached a point where half a dozen blacks waded in and hauled me out. They had found the boy crawling on the beach, they said, and when they had fastened the line to a tree had carried him to a native hut a short distance back from the water.

We pulled Virginie ashore, and after her the men came down the line one by one. Thus the moment arrived when we all stood together on the sand, drenched, exhausted, and bruised, but safe; then, guided by the blacks, we trooped away through a grove which, because the force of the wind was broken and the roar of the surf muffled, seemed deathly still by contrast with the tumult we had just left. Soon we came to a small clearing, across which we saw, through the rain, the gleam from the door of the hut.

The boy lay on a mat in the center of the one room of the structure, eyes closed, appearing weak and pale in the light of a taper which, set in a tin close by his head, shed its rays in a circle about him but left the ceiling in shadow. In a corner beyond, a native woman was stirring something over a fire on the earth floor.

Virginie knelt beside him. He opened his eyes when she put her hand on his forehead, and smiled up at her; then glanced past her at Captain Lacasse, at the rest of us, in turn, and apparently content, closed them again. An indistinct preliminary rumble came from the captain's throat. But at that moment Virginie raised her hand for silence, and the words were not uttered.

"Brother!" she said, softly.

A tremor passed over the boy. For a brief moment he was still; then his chest heaved quickly and violently, his eyes opened, he lifted himself on his elbow, and his face shone with happiness.

"Sister!" he exclaimed.

With a sob Virginie bent down and clasped his head to her bosom, kissing him again and again.

Captain Lacasse now found his voice.

"Child!" he cried, hoarsely. "What does this mean?"

Thereupon Virginie arose, and looking up unafraid into his face, stone-hard in its sternness, said simply—

"It means, grandfather, that here is my brother."

The old man's body quivered.

"How do you know this?" he demanded.

"The night he was ill," said Virginie, her fingers pressed together until the knuckles stood out like white knobs, "he was at times light-headed. And he said over and over to himself aloud: 'Yes, mother, I shall remember! I am to say to him, "Your daughter Clairette, she loves you!"; and to her, "Here am I, your brother!"; but not until I can say truthfully that I have fought the curse and am at last free. I shall take care to remember this, little mother!'"

From Captain Lacasse came a choking cry.

"Your mother, lad—where is she?"

The boy regarded him through a mist of tears.

"It was on her death-bed she said it," he replied, gently.

The captain, looking very old, groped his way to the door and stood facing out into the darkness and the rain, which, being almost stopped, fell with a soft pattering like the passing of many tiny feet. At intervals the lightning, now but a feeble intermittent glow in the distant sky, showed faintly above the top of the curtain of trees in front of the hut, and outlined his massive frame in the doorway. Except for the rustling of the rain on the thatched roof and our breathing, the silence in the room was complete.

At length he turned, and with lips that trembled, tried to shape a question.

The boy rose to his feet with the assistance of Virginie, and steadying himself by holding to her hand, confronted him.

"I have tried my strength and I am not afraid," he said.

"Nor I," said Virginie, softly.

Captain Lacasse slowly extended his hands, drew his two grandchildren into his arms, and pressed them tightly to his breast. And when he spoke, his voice was very tender.

"Nor I, thank God!" he said.

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Red Acadia

A FOUR-PART STORY

PART III

by J·U·GIESY

Author of "The Signal-Fire", "The Return", etc.

The first part of the story briefly retold in story form

I CALL myself Ashur Wolf. I was two years old when my foster-father, Sheshequins, a Delaware Leni Lenape warrior of the Monsey—Wolf—totem brought me back from a border fray, in which my parents had been killed, and adopted me in place of a still-born child his wife had borne. Thus I was carried across the Ohio River and became one of the "lost children" in the Northwest Territory.

Sheshequins took me to Mowaequa his wife and Nashoba—Gray Wolf—his first-born. I was adopted into the tribe by the blood-rite and became an Indian in all save birth. My boyhood I look back to with naught but pleasure. When I killed my first buffalo I received my final name—Waopduksit, or the White Wolf.

Now to our tribe had come two Moravian preachers, Zeisberger and Heckwelder, with their converts, who taught Christianity and peace. Our tribe soon became divided into two camps—one of peace, the other war.

The final break came in 1775 when our chiefs Glickhican and White Eyes refused to take the war-path against the Americans or Long Knives as they were called. Unable to overcome the peace sentiments, Captain Pipe led the war party out of our village of Goschocking and established a town of his own. Sheshequins joined with Pipe.

But the majority of the tribe remained behind and the influence of the Moravians spread. So while the Revolution raged around them our people took no part in it. The British governor tried vainly to overcome this peace influence, but the Moravians always converted the leaders of expeditions sent against them.

In 1778 there arrived in our country three men who had been held prisoners by the Americans at Pittsburg. They were McKee, Elliott and Simon Girty—filled with hatred for the Americans and sworn to revenge. McKee was appointed agent and manager of our district by the British governor, and Captain Pipe took him into his councils.

Meanwhile the Moravian settlements on the Tuscarawas were looked on with distrust by both English and Americans, each believing them allies of the other.

Finally, in 1781, Major de Puyster, commander at Detroit, determined to rid himself of the Moravians and authorized McKee to attend to it. The three whites called at our village and invited Captain Pipe and his party to visit Pomoacan, the Wyandot chief, to discuss the matter. Pipe agreed and Sheshequins, Nashoba and I were members of the party.

Pomoacan was a friend of the Moravian converts and would not injure them, but Elliott, who assumed the lead, promised that they were only to be removed to protect them from the Americans who distrusted them. To this Pomoacan finally agreed and the council broke up. We returned to our village.

ON THE tenth of August our party, composed of about two hundred warriors—Pipe's men, Wyandots, Ottawas and Shawnees—arrived at the Moravian town of Salem on the Tuscarawas. I can still recall the peaceful settlement as it lay that evening—and the feeling of regret at our purpose which came over me.

Elliott and his chiefs called Heckwelder and his National Assistants together, stated his purpose, and arranged for a conference the next day at Gnadenhütten, six miles up the river. The next day we entered Gnadenhütten, and the conference began in the Long House.

While Nashoba and I walked through the town we came to a house from which singing floated. The house was a school filled with children, but my eyes saw nothing but the woman with red-brown hair who sat at the further end. She advanced, spoke to us and invited us to stay while another song was sung. As we left after the song, Nashoba eyed me and said—

"At last you have looked upon a woman, my brother."

I gave him but a glance in reply.

That afternoon I spent in the forest, thinking over the woman. As I returned to town, I came upon the woman of my thoughts looking down upon our camp.

For some time we talked and I learned that

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she was of the Mohicas, Macksithannes by name.

"The stream of the bear's path," I smiled. "That white maid, is where you were found." My heart was beating against my ribs—here was another of the "lost children" like myself.

Then she spoke of her people and likened them to the Man on the Cross.

"Who was that Man?" I asked.

For answer she invited me to their church that night.

Meanwhile the council had been in trouble, for Elliott had thrown off his mask and demanded that the converts be removed and their teachers taken from them. Glickhican opposed this and Pomoacan the Wyandot, agreed with him.

THAT evening we all attended the church—our men and the Moravian converts. But in all that throng a face leaped out before my eyes—the face of the woman.

After the meeting Macksithannes came to me and introduced me to Heckwelder, who invited me to visit him at his house. As the girl and I left the meeting-house we passed Elliott in the doorway. When he saw her he gave a start of surprise, then bent forward to look boldly at her. She said nothing, but I felt her quick instinctive shrinking against me.

"The man with the eyes of the snake," she whispered.

"He shall not harm you while I live, Macksithannes," I answered, and in that moment my hatred for Elliott was born.

On our way to her home Macksithannes—Metta, as the teachers called her—told me the story of her life; raised from childhood by the Mohicans.

At the teachers' home I talked some time and learned that Metta was unmarried—one of the "single sisters."

The next morning at the council Pomoacan appeared with Glickhican, our old chief, to the disgust of Elliott. That morning the council was stormy. Glickhican made an impassioned and fair speech pleading for time to gather their crops and that their teachers be allowed to go with them. But Elliott answered him insultingly and Pipe backed him up, berating Glickhican with insults.

Glickhican rose without a word, folded his blanket, stalked from the house and left the village.

Then Pomoacan and Elliott had angry words. The Wyandot likewise folded his blanket and led his chiefs from the house. The council was over.

That afternoon I again led Metta into the forest.

"Metta, when will you come to my lodge?" I asked her.

"Does a maiden wed an enemy of her people?" she answered. "The Little Stream's path leads not on the war trail. Visit the teachers, learn to be white in more than birth."

"I will go to your teachers then, Little Stream," I promised.

AT LAST the Shawnees and Ottawas joined our camp but the council dragged on three weeks more. Feeling against Elliott, among the Wyandots and Delawares, meanwhile grew worse.

Then one morning in passing through the camp I picked up a scrap of paper caught in some weeds. It was covered with writing—probably blown from Elliott's tent.

As soon as the school was over I sought out Metta and took her to the forest. There I showed her the paper. She read what was written.

"Those are names of the Shawnee tribe," I declared. "The council goes not to Elliott's liking and the Shawnees trust more in the hatchet than in words. These may be men Elliott has selected for a purpose of his own."

"You have heard nothing in the camp?"

"Nay. This is of Elliott's planning with the Shawnee," I answered, "yet perhaps a wolf can find out the plan of a fox."

"You will watch, White Wolf," she said swiftly, "will you not? Think what would be my fate were aught to happen to our teachers or were they banished."

"Whatever happens, I, White Wolf, of the Leni Lenape, will be here."

"Brother Heckwelder has told me as much," she replied.

"And what says Metta of the Moravians."

"Macksithannes made her wedding-dress long before her heart told her it was all white," she said softly.

ON MY way back to camp I decided to watch Elliott's tent that night. Nashoba insisted on joining me. So when the fires died to embers, he stole off to watch the Shawnee camp while I crept on my belly to Elliott's tent.

After an hour my vigil was rewarded. Three muffled forms which I recognized as Shawnees, entered the tent. Prying a corner of the tent loose, I could see what went on inside.

"On the night after this you shall go to the house of these teachers when all lights are out," Elliott directed. "Two quick blows with your hatchets, without noise or trouble, and these teachers will be removed."

Gray Hawk, leader of the Shawnees, agreed readily.

Then Elliott went on, speaking of Metta:

"Tomorrow you will learn where she lives. After the men are disposed of you shall take her to my place on the Scioto and see she waits there my return. To that end you will tie your pack tomorrow night when you to to the town and leave it on the outskirts ready for your need."

"So then shall this thing be done," agreed Gray Hawk.

But I, back of the tent, was minded to think it would not be as he said. Silently I slipped out of the Shawnee camp, back to our own, and confided to Nashoba and Sheshequins the plan which had formed in my mind:

"Tomorrow will we go among the Leni Lenape and find some wolves whose teeth are not dull. Tomorrow I shall tell this maiden what is intended and see to it that the white teachers know that a wolf-pack shall lair at night about their door. Also would it be well that one should see where this Gray Hawk lays down his pack when he enters the town tomorrow night, that we may bring it back.

"Then shall we go to the meeting tomorrow night but we shall not return to the camp. Rather shall we lie in wait at the teachers' house until these slinking panthers come to make their kill. So shall we take them before they have found their prey.

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CHAPTER IX

HISTORY will record how this attempt on the teachers' lives was made, and it will tell you that the thing failed because of the watching care of the Indians themselves. Indeed history will seem to indicate that it was the Moravian converts who nipped the plan at the start and so brought it to naught.

Nor have I any quarrel with history, which doubtless records how the thing may have seemed to those who set it down from what information they had. Oftentimes God knows a thing looks different from two sides and it is the white man who has written history, both for the red men and the white. History is true in saying the attempt was foiled by the Indians themselves. But it errs in making it appear that the converts did it. How could they have done so against armed men coming for a definite purpose, when they themselves did not and were known not to believe in fighting, in armed resistance at all.

Nay, it was a band of Indians prevented that horror Elliott had planned, but it was a band from that camp where his own tent stood which raised itself between the two white men in their cabin and the prowling assassins who crept toward it through the night.

I found that band easily enough when I returned to the camp, as I did so soon as Metta and I had walked back to Big Owl's cabin and I had left her at the gate.

They were stripped to their breech-clouts, and engaged in casting the javelin or spear, in what seemed a pastime of friendly rivalry, jeering each other at a miss and applauding each hit with slaps of the hands against their thighs and good-natured foolery of sorts. There was quite a band of all the several tribes in camp gathered about to watch them, which first led me to the spot. Once there, however, I found them all men of the Leni Lenape, with Nashoba as handsome as some of the bronze statues I have seen since those days, in his lithe, naked strength.

He caught sight of me at once, as I paused among the crowd of watchers.

"*Nai, Waopduksit!*" he cried (Hello, White Wolf). "We are assembled for sport. Come, oh younger brother of the Gray Wolf and show what you can do."

At once others broke out in acclaim.

"Aye, give White Wolf a spear and let him show if his arm has lost its strength."

"Aye—come, White Wolf."

"Thou shalt throw my javelin!"

One of the contestants thrust the ash shaft he held toward my hand.

I nodded. I had caught a glance from Nashoba which told me this was an hour spent in loosening muscles which three weeks of idling had rendered less supple than normal rather than a game. I knew these were the wolves we would lead this night. But I gave no sign save a smile as I took the proffered spear and slipped out of my leggings so that I stood as nearly naked as any there.

Now, as it chanced, Nashoba and I had practised this trick of casting no little ever since children, and until I arrived he had excelled all the rest. Hence when I stepped forward a sudden silence fell over the watchers until I had thrown the javelin and scored a perfect hit.

Then the acclaim broke out save for the voice of one man, which came in almost sneering fashion.

"Well cast for a—white."

I spun about, while once more the silence came down. I marked a Shawnee standing with folded arms and a slight smile on his lips. And my heart surged as I saw him. My lips came open.

"Well enough to pierce a Gray Hawk should he fly across my path," I rejoined; "or to turn an enemy's point were there a war head on the spear."

He started forward.

"Say you so, white suckling of the wolves," he began, laying his hand on his hatchet. "There is holding ground for the Gray Hawk's talons in thy yellow hair."

"Unless my hatchet clip his wing in flight and so send him to a lower ground a-flutter," I cried, half-drawing my weapon from its thrum-fringed sheath.

"Hold!"

A hand fell on the Shawnee's shoulder. I marked a Wyandot—one of Pomoacan's captains.

"Hold, or I speak to the father's agent of this. The Delaware made a good cast. There was small reason for a Shawnee to put a war head on his speech."

He dragged the Gray Hawk back.

He yielded, scowling.

"Think you," he said, still sneering, "that

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our brother Elliott will give heed to the wailing of women if one of their number be hurt?"

The thing was past bearing. My young wolves pressed behind me. Others of the Delawares in the circle began murmuring and pushing closer to where the Shawnee stood. But once more the Wyandot captain raised his hand.

"Stand fast, men of the Wolf Clan," he commanded, and spoke to Gray Hawk again. "Fly back to your captain while yet you can, man of the Shawnees, nor seek to line your nest with hair from the backs of wolves."

Gray Hawk shrugged. He turned on his heel and stalked off. But the seed had been sown, and as for me, I felt there would be no peace between him and me until one of us had overcome the other. I only hoped that chance might this night give him into my hand. Should it do so I vowed to place my mark upon him before we should part. And could anything more have been needed to set my heart on the work of the coming night, as surely there was not, this senseless encounter with the Shawnee would have furnished it to my mind.

Furthermore, it had broken up the game. The young wolves clustered about me, five of them, as we donned our leggings. Wyandots, Ottawas and Delawares drifted away, the latter with dark scowls. Nashoba and our five companions walked a little way together. I learned that he who had given me the spear, a young warrior called Red Wing, was to trail the Shawnee party from the camp, and the others were to attend the meeting with Nashoba and me.

"Ho," said I, "a Red Wing to steal the pack of a Gray Hawk."

Red Wing flashed his teeth.

"I had rather steal his crest," he growled, with a hand on his knife.

"Leave him to the pack, my brother," I told him. "He will resemble more a dog when he slinks back to his master than any hawk of which we know."

Then Nashoba and I left the others and found a place where we could sit down in the shade of some bushes and talk.

"You have made an enemy," my brother said.

"I have driven an enemy into the open," I retorted. "He is the one who was to lead the maid to the Sciota to await the foul hands of the agent of the king."

Nashoba nodded.

"So much I knew when you named him, little brother. What said the maid when you told her these things?"

I threw up my head, since I was proud of the words my Moravian maid had spoken.

"That she would die, ere Elliott had his way." And then I went on somewhat more gruffly because of the depths of my purpose. "My brother, when the time comes tonight, give this nest-fouling hawk to me."

He laid a hand on my arm, and he smiled. But he shook his head as he replied:

"Spoken like a Delaware, little brother. But there must be no splitting of heads in this affair. I have spoken with our father while you spoke with your maid. He has given me wise counsel—learned from greater years. We must not kill, since that could make but more trouble at the present. Sheshequins has spoken; a sure eye to the rifle sight is a good thing, but a sure inner eye to the situation is far better. His words seem good words to me."

"Aye," I agreed. "There shall be no killing save in defense of our own lives should these dogs show fight. Yet I would put my mark upon the hide of this one at least, that he may remember one wolf who can bite."

Nashoba smiled again and covered my hand with his own, pressing it in a mood of understanding.

"The Shawnee saw somewhat of the color of your teeth this afternoon," he replied.

"Aye," I nodded, scowling. "And but for the Wyandot, he should have felt them too."

Nashoba changed the matter we discussed.

"The teachers will be informed of our coming?"

"Aye," I said again.

"I have a supply of grease," he announced. "We must oil ourselves after the meeting, before these Shawnees come."

Thus we planned as we sat there, speaking sometimes, sometimes silent in that perfect silence of life-long association which is at times more full of feeling than words. Gray Wolf and White Wolf, we sat or lay in the shadow of our bush as we had done so many a time in the past and the afternoon ran away and brought the evening after a time.

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THE tolling of the church bell began to fill the mellow light as the sun sank behind the forest. Nashoba and I rose. We went to his place in the camp and he opened his pack, to obtain the grease he had mentioned. With it inside his shirt, since we always donned our shirts when we went to the meetings, we set forth toward the town. I glanced toward Elliott's tent as we passed.

Inside was no doubt the man who thought to play his evil trick this evening and so deliver the praying Indians into his hands, and win a fair woman for his plaything at one and the same time. I set my teeth with a snap, faced the other way and walked on with Nashoba at my side.

We reached the town and mingled with the converts as they moved toward the church. Seemingly my brother and I walked alone. Yet we knew the other four men of the Leni Lenape would follow unless they were already there. It was thus we had planned, that no hint of our knowledge might reach either Elliott or the Shawnees.

We gained the building and passed inside, finding seats in a scantily occupied part of the church. Other Delawares came and, noting us, dropped down beside us. One by one I counted the rest of our party until there were four. I felt a sense of satisfaction. We were ready. I glanced about the church. My gaze turned toward the part held by the women.

And there I saw her—my maid of the red-brown hair and the sun-browned skin. Her eyes met mine, frank, open, level, with no hint of fear in their deep, brown depths. I smiled back in answer to their gaze, and turned my head to make not too obtrusive my staring. And all at once I stiffened.

Elliott was in the back of the room. I saw him sitting there, with a slight smile of contempt on his crafty lips. It struck me he had come to watch and gloat over these people whose fate he now felt he held in his hands. He was telling himself, most likely, that before another day, two of them would be dead and the other gone far into the forest, where he would find her in his own good time.

Heckwelder rose and spoke. The meeting ran its usual course. Then it was done. The teachers were speaking to their converts as on the night of that first meeting I had attended. I saw Metta leave the church with Big Owl and Little Duck, her foster-parents. I passed out myself and stood waiting until Elliott came forth and strode away toward the camp. Nashoba was with me and we found the other four of our party outside.

Dusk had fallen. It was easy for one or a dozen to melt into its shadows if they wished. We slipped away toward the teachers' house by twos as we had planned. There was yet much time to wait. Elliott had so ordered and I felt sure the attack would not be made until all lights were out in the town. I had even instructed Metta to ask the teachers to show light in their house for a time after they returned from the church and act in all things as was their custom, that the Shawnees might have no reason to suspect. And for the same reason we did not approach their house from the front but from the rear, that no watching eye might see us enter their garden, and so be warned.

Also at the back of the house we slipped out of our shirts and leggings, so that we stood in clouts and moccasins alone and with the grease which Nashoba had brought we went over one another's bodies until they were no more than slender, slippery forms, very difficult to lay hands upon and hold. For though we would outnumber them two to one, there was not one of us there but believed in his heart that the Shawnees would probably show fight. One thing and only one would keep them from it, and that would be their anxiety to avoid too much disturbance whereby their attempt would be betrayed.

Toward the possible furtherance of their surrender, I instructed each of my men to give the battle-cry of our clan—the wolf cry, as we called it, as he sprang to the attack. I hoped that, knowing us men of the camp rather than men of the town, they would surrender more readily, knowing as they would that their plan had been known and prepared for in advance.

It was while we were rubbing one another with the grease in the darkness of the garden, close to the wall of the house, that a light shone forth from a chink in its wall and I knew that the teachers had returned. Then quite without warning came the sound of the house door closing and footfalls shuffled toward one end of the cabin; the wolf cry rang softly in my ears.

For a moment I paused. The light still showed through the chink. As long as it

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was there, I knew we were safe from attack.

"Stay here," I whispered to Nashoba and the others and creeping on all fours, I slipped about the house toward the sound I had heard.

"Who voices the wolf cry?" I said softly when I could see the dark bulk of a man standing against the stars.

"I," came Heckwelder's voice. "Is it thou, my son, as I was told it would be?"

"Aye," I replied. "But will you not return to your house, my father, and leave this matter to us?"

"Not until I have cautioned you, my son," said he. "I who have lived longer know that the blood of youth flows hotly. Let there be no slaying in this matter. Form thou a guard about me, since it seems the will of the Almighty that you should have been warned of Elliott's plot in time to bring it to naught. Let these men he sends see you here and ready, but shed not their blood, my son."

He was brave too, in his way, that old man, and his words were much the same Sheshequins had spoken to Nashoba, but I did not think it best to have him standing there, lest the Shawnees might have thrown forward a scout and so have word of the trap into which they were to be led.

Therefore I did not debate the matter with him.

"Go you back to your cabin and leave this matter to me and my brothers," I made answer. "Already has our father, of whom I have told you, said like words in our ears. Hence return and blow out your light."

"Thank you, my son," he said softly, and I saw him move toward the door, which opened and closed again as I crept back to where I had left my men.

WE CROUCHED down in the shadow of the wall and waited, and after a time the thread of light which I watched between two of the logs in the cabin wall, went out.

Then I gave my signal in a hiss and we crept about the house toward the front, three this way, and three the other; two of the young men with me, and two with Nashoba, to guard the door.

The Moravians raised many things in their gardens; potatoes, peas, beans, the vines of pumpkins and squashes, set out in rows as the teachers had taught them, and it was between these rows of growing things we stretched ourselves out flat on the ground, hatchet in hand, knife thrust through the thong of our clouts, to wait for the coming of the men Elliott had sent. Three of us placed ourselves on either side of the path which led from the gate to the door.

When they came up that path we would rise and close upon them from each side at once, two to each man in silence save for the muffled wolf cry which should tell them of our clan. The plan was simple enough in its conception, but both the Gray Wolf and myself counted upon its unexpectedness to carry the Shawnees off their feet both by numbers and in confusion, when we attacked.

We faced the gate as we lay with bodies flat and ears wide open. Not a word was spoken after we took our stations. The house was dark behind us. The rows of growing things against which we lay hid us completely. There was nothing now to tell of our presence. Only a very keen ear could have caught the sound of a breath. Only a red man or one trained for years as a red man as I had been could have held that ambuscade as we held it that night.

Nay, I do not think that unless they had scented us, could they have known we were there, hugging close to the dark earth and the tiny leaves of the plants—and had they scented us, or the grease upon us, as they well might have done, being red men, it would have been too late, for we, too, were men of the open with every sense alert so that we would have heard them as they drew together and spoke of the smell of us in their nostrils.

But there was small chance of that. That night the Shawnees were not as they thought proceeding against a wakeful or watchful foe, but against a sleeping town inhabited by men of a clan they despised and a part of that clan which had fallen somewhat from the vigilance of the native red man, thanks to the teachings of the men they came to slay. They moved not with the stealth they would have adopted in a similar foray against another tribe, for they fancied themselves unsuspected and their victims ready to their hand.

To come into the town, to enter the house, the door of which, like the doors of all Indian lodges in those days, was never locked, to seek out the sleeping men on

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their shelves by their breathing alone and split their age-brittled skulls by a single blow of a knife-sharp hatchet. To creep out, leaving death behind them. It was no task for men trained to the part of stealth, as Nashoba and I had known when we planned to prevent the act.

Thus all we did was to lie there waiting, knowing they must come to the door to gain the inside of the cabin, since I had told Metta to instruct the teachers to fasten the shutters before their windows, thus leaving but one means of ingress should Gray Hawk and his fellows try another first. And that way we were guarding. I smiled grimly as I hugged the cool earth to my naked breast and watched the street beyond the gate. And that last thought brought another of the girl herself.

She had said she would lay her sweet body on her sleeping-shelf and close her eyes this night as another, since I stood between her and the harm the man with the snake eyes was plotting for her. Her trust had fired me, made my every sense, my every nerve and muscle strong to show her it was deserved, and that she loved a man able to defend her not only in this, but in more and worse, since after all this was but a little matter as such things went, when once it was known of in advance.

Into my thoughts broke the sibilant hiss of warning from the man behind me.

"Does the White Wolf hear the padfall of a Shawnee dog?" he inquired.

I strained my ears on the instant, with every nerve drawn tense. And faintly it seemed to me I heard the scuff of a moccasined foot. I slid an arm out and touched the youth who had spoken, pressing him down in lieu of a verbal reply.

Once more I heard a footfall, very soft but beyond mistake, and then before my eyes it seemed that three shadowy figures slid ghostlike down the street. A moment later I was sure. They were coming toward the house, swiftly, in single-file. I felt the man on whom my hand was laid begin to quiver like a dog which watches beside the hole of a woodchuck or rabbit, and I knew he had seen our quarry too, and I pressed upon him even more firmly less he make some movement or his mere shaking come to the Shawnees' ears as a rustle among the leaves against which he lay.

The Shawnees came on, reached the gate and paused. Plainly as it seemed they meant to make sure of their destination before essaying the attack on which they had been sent—that foul splitting of the skulls of two old men asleep, which Elliott had decreed. But only for a moment they stood there until satisfied no doubt that this was the house, and that their intended victims were actually sunk in that slumber from which they were meant never to wake.

Then they advanced straight up the path toward the teachers' door, still slinking along in single-file, half-crouched, shadowy forms in the night.

I waited no longer, but opened my mouth. "*Hai-ee!*" I uttered the cry of the evil spirits which was the signal for the attack on which we had agreed.

The quivering form on which I had held my hand shot up as from a loosened spring. The wolf cry swelled from its throat. Echoing it in a rising volume, my men rose as one and we hurled ourselves upon the figures on the path, catching them in the first instant of their startled hesitation and sweeping the first two off their feet.

But the third—the one nearest the gate—fell not so easily into our hands. The scant difference of distance which separated him from us as we sprang toward him gave him his chance. Sensing our rush rather than seeing it, as I imagine, he spun around in his tracks. I reached for him and missed my clutch as he dashed back along the path.

Behind me the grunt of the struggling men told me his companions were held. Leaving the others to finish the business, I leaped after the man I had failed to seize. I could hear the sound of his feet as he ran. Clenching my hatchet firmly in my hand, I followed him down the street.

CHAPTER X

AND now that ability as a runner, which I had gained with Nashoba as a child, of which I had boasted to him the day we came down on the Moravian towns, stood me in good stead, because as I ran, the sound of the feet I pursued grew louder rather than fainter and I knew that I gained upon him in his flight.

Encouraged thus I redoubled my efforts and ran as I had never run before. And suddenly the sound I followed failed. The

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fellow had stopped, probably darted aside in the hope that I would run past him and lose him in the dark. But he was counting without the keen sense of hearing which was ever mine. I slowed and went forward at a careful walk and I heard him breathe, also I heard the sound of other feet behind me and knew that some one—Nashoba as I fancied it would be—was coming to my aid.

I stopped in my tracks and peered about me. Close to a fence I thought that I saw a shadow, a darker blot than any other. I crept closer, and made sure. I stood up and moved to one side as though baffled, I were about to pass on. If I could see him, I knew he could see me, and he must hear the other runner coming down the street. I thought he would chance all on a dash—and he did.

A stick, some dried weed, or something cracked as he rose. I spun about and leaped toward him. Our bodies crashed together. The fellow had not even removed his leggings for the night's adventure. With one hand I caught their band and with the other I laid the edge of my hatchet against his flesh. Our faces were close together and even in the night I recognized his scowling visage.

"The Gray Hawk flies not so swiftly after all, since he can be overtaken by a wolf," I growled.

And even as I spoke, Nashoba pounded up and laid hold of the fellow on the other side, after wresting his knife and hatchet from their sheaths. That was too much for the Shawnee to endure in silence and he unloosed his tongue.

"Dogs of Delawares," he broke forth with grating teeth, "you are well named wolves. For the wolves have no courage save in the pack and must hunt not as men but as their namesakes, so that it would seem to require at least two, to lay hands on one Shawnee. Have your packmates throttled my brothers? If so, beware of the Shawnee wrath."

Nashoba laughed.

"There is a scotched Snake of a black color and a Turtle which has drawn its head into its shell in the garden of the teachers' house," he replied. "If they be your brothers, then they are waiting for the coming of the Hawk that lives on mice and nestling birds and other helpless kill, which know not how to strike back. Were you not warned today not to enmesh your talons in the hair of wolves lest they become tangled, Shawnee?"

"There will be trouble over this, Delaware," the Shawnee declared, controlling himself with an effort, under Gray Wolf's taunt.

"I doubt it not. When it is learned, the Shawnees will yowl like a family of tree-cats at the funeral of one of their number." Nashoba chuckled again, as he spoke. "Come, my brother, let us take this Hawk where the Snake waits with drawn fangs and the Turtle with harmless jaws."

"Good," I agreed, and we urged the Shawnee back up the street.

And now as we went I saw light. The door of the teachers' house stood open and the light of a bark flare stuck into the soft soil of the garden beside the path shone on the group of our four Delawares, the Shawnees, and Heckwelder and Zeisberger also, who had come out and were waiting with the others.

Gray Hawk grunted as we led him into the light of the flare, which flickered over the bronze skins of our party, the naked upper bodies of the Shawnees and glinted on the white hair of the teachers, making a striking picture there in the center of the night.

"So," he growled. "What said Gray Hawk, the Shawnee, that the wolf clan hunted only in a pack. You came in numbers to give you courage, Delawares—even as your whole pack snapped at Gray Hawk's heels this afternoon, while their adopted brother refused the dare of a personal trial of worth. Fleet he may be of foot as but now he boasted. That is well. It may yet stand him in stead as a result of this night."

I was young and I do not deny that his sharp tongue stung me.

"Gray Hawk lies in his throat," I broke out. "It was no fault of mine that a Wyandot captain gave the Shawnee counsel which he deemed it safer to accept. My hand was on my hatchet to clip his wings as I said. And we come here tonight in numbers to render certain the safety of the men the Gray Hawk and his fellows sought to strike, since Pomoacan of the Wyandots has guaranteed their safety, and the Shawnees sought to make a liar of Pomoacan as well as of themselves."

"Say you so?" He turned his evil eyes upon me. "You bark loudly, White Wolf. Come—it appears you have your hatchet

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handy tonight as this afternoon. If your words be not the boasting of a wolf cub amid his kind, I would put ye to the test."

Plainly enough he was turning something in his crafty brain, but then I gave it no consideration. No warrior could brook such a challenge before his fellows and ever again hold up his head. Wherefore I met him eye to eye.

"Speak, Gray Hawk," I said.

"If then you are not afraid," he began as the words left my lips, "give me my hatchet, and clip my wings if you can. Shouldst ye do so, I and my fellows are thine to do with as ye please. But should thy boast prove vain, we go our way, with no hand lifted against us. What say ye, oh, white-skinned Delaware?"

Nor did I hesitate then. Not even did I give him the courtesy of a reply direct. Rather I turned to Nashoba who had stood silent and watchful, since Gray Hawk first spoke.

"Give him his hatchet," I said. "Take up the flare and hold it to give us light. This thing shall be settled here and now."

Nashoba did not demur. To his mind and mine, the thing was inevitable and had been should the Shawnee and I come ever together since the previous afternoon. Without a word he extended his hand and gave Gray Hawk's hatchet back into the owner's grasp. While the four other Delawares and their captives drew back to leave the Shawnee and me standing alone, he turned and caught up the flare, swinging it briefly about in a circle to fan it to a brighter light.

But Heckwelder did not look upon the occasion in the stoical fashion with which we others met it.

"My son," came his voice, even as his hand fell upon my arm.

I shook off the contact.

"This is not anything of thy making, my father," I said shortly. "Let be. Thou canst not prevent it any more than thou canst command the eight winds to cease their blowing. When two bucks meet at the season, their antlers shall clash till the stronger prevail. Thus is it written by the hand of Welsheetmonet Himself."

"Also is it written, thou shalt not kill," he told me.

I smiled upon him, feeling even then a little thrill of humor.

"Who speaks of killing," I returned, aping a surprise I knew would sting the Gray Hawk into a fury. "I am merely about to clip the wings of an unclean bird."

"Nay!"

THE word sent my heart leaping into my mouth. A figure thrust its way from behind the clustering bodies of our young men and the two Shawnees. I sensed that it had come on flying feet from the door of the teachers' house which now stood open.

"Nay, White Wolf—this thing must not be."

Not until she was quite beside me, did Metta pause and stand staring into my face with a world of pleading in her own as the light from the flare struck down upon it.

But then I was on fire, strung taut for the shock of my first real battle. And I had thought her at home in Big Owl's house, very probably asleep since she had said she would sleep this night under my protection. Now, however, she had run from the open door at the end of the path. Doubtless she had been there all along, since I felt sure she had not come during the time we had stood outside the house. She had spread her blanket not on the shelf of Big Owl's hut then, but here with the two white men, whose lives I had led my men to save. The thing stung me to the retort which fell swiftly from my lips."

"Who says must to White Wolf, maiden? Stand aside rather and behold the strength of the arm in whose power to guard you ye must have doubted, since now ye are here."

Her eyes seemed to me to widen in the flaring circles of the light. But she said no further word, though her lips parted as above speech and then closed again without sound. Heckwelder laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"Come, my daughter," I heard him say as he drew her to one side.

And now had anything been needed to wake my heart to fury, I had it. Because for the first moment when I saw her, I actually thought she had feared to remain with her foster-parents and had so sought refuge with the two whites whose house she knew would be under our guard. Of the issue of the combat in which I was about to engage I had no fear. Really I think I welcomed it beyond anything else as a means of glutting the hot rage and

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chagrin which seemed to boil up in my breast.

"Watch out for yourself, Shawnee," I said thickly. "This wolf has no broken teeth."

They were the words Elliott had used the night before, and I thought the fellow started slightly as I gripped my hatchet and took a crouching step toward him. Yet that may have been no more than the tensing of his muscles before he sprang forward in a single surprising leap and struck.

He did not, however, catch me napping. My own slow advance had been gaged to produce some such action upon his part and I was prepared. My hatchet flashed out and up in a parry, which turned the blade of his and deflected the blow in a futile downward sweep. Then as I felt my own weapon disengaged, I struck in turn, so that only a quick twist on the part of my antagonist, saved him from harm.

"Fight on the ground, Gray Hawk," I taunted him again as we once more faced one another, and he answered with a rush.

We crashed together. I felt his naked breast against mine. My free hand locked upon his wrist just below the hand which grasped his hatchet and equally I found my own arm caught in a grip of iron. His leg came up and sought to twist about mine and trip me, since neither of us could strike. We struggled, turning, with straining muscles each seeking to gain the advantage. There was no sound save our own panting respiration and the stamp of our feet. Our fellows stood watching what now as I recall it must have been a vicious scene of primitive passion and conflict thrown up by the flare Nashoba held.

In this part of our battle I now found myself with the advantage. The grease with which I had rubbed myself was no small aid. For though I held Gray Hawk's wrist beyond any effort of his to release it, his fingers slipped on mine, past any power of his to control. So in the end I wrenched my arm loose and thrusting the hand against his breast flung him back from me and broke his grip.

He staggered back, bent like a flash and rubbed his palm in the dirt.

"So, Delaware wolf," he panted, "you are greased."

"The claws of a hawk should pierce the hide not slip upon it," I flung my taunt back in his teeth, and followed it with a rush.

He met it as best he could, yet hardly steady upon his feet from his reach for earth with which to overcome the slippery state of my skin. The crash with which I flung myself upon him set him a-stagger and made his first motion of defense erratic. His hatchet rose to meet the blow I aimed, but poorly timed. My weapon shot past it, grazing it, yet not turned aside, and the blade bit deep into the bulging cap of muscles just below his shoulder, so that the flesh gaped open and the blood flowed in a dark stream down his arm.

He grunted, and his face twitched past all control as the blow went home. The arm jerked downward and the fingers relaxed their hold on the hatchet under the numbing effect of my stroke and its result. Yet he was not defeated by any tenet of the red man's code. As the hatchet was about to fall, he caught it with his other hand and aimed a blow at my head which had I not jerked it quickly to one side would have split my skull. As it was it jarred me until I was dizzy and, as I knew some hours later, clipped off some part of my hair.

But despite a buzzing as of a thousand bees in my brain, a strange sense of elation filled me as I sprang back beyond his reach and shot a fresh taunt into his ears.

"Look you, Shawnee, White Wolf does as he says. Wherefore having said thy wing should be clipped, it is done. Is this proof sufficient or do you require yet more?"

For in very truth the man could not lift the arm I had so most sadly gashed. It hung useless like a bloody flail at his side, and his eyes were dark with pain. With a guttural shout he flung himself toward me, and as I braced myself to meet him, he lifted his other arm and without striking as I had expected, hurled his hatchet full at me instead.

To this day I do not see how he missed me. The blade brushed my skin above my heart, actually tore it slightly as it passed so that the blood started in a trickle down my side, yet passed and left the Shawnee unarmed and quite at my mercy, as sensing the treachery of his act and filled with a new accession of rage, I seized him by the arm which had hurled the hatchet, and brought my own weapon down upon it, breaking the bone.

"Now, I brought you to earth at last, treacherous hawk," I cried, and thrust him from me, so that he fell in a heap, on the ground.

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THUS I clipped the wings of the Gray Hawk and won my first real fight. And as I stood looking down upon him I was young, thrilling from the effects of a vast and somewhat perilous effort and the mere muscular exertion through which I had passed. More than that it was ever the way of the Indian to boast somewhat of exploits, either his own or those of his people. Let that in some extent explain my following acts.

I turned slowly toward the watching group of my fellows and folded my arms. But it was Heckwelder and Metta to whom I spoke.

"So, my father, has White Wolf of the Delawares kept his promise, and though blood has been shed yet none is slain. Yet even so has White Wolf proved himself a man, able to do a man's part, and should he give his word of protection to man or woman, to stand between them and harm. Wherefore, since this thing is ended, return to your sleep in safety, and let the woman go with thee or to her own house, should she deem that now a safe place to rest."

"White Wolf!" My maid started forward. "You fail to understand. You are wounded. You bleed."

I glanced not at her but down at my breast where the hatchet had grazed me.

"The scratch of a bird's claw," I pushed the matter aside. And still without meeting her eyes, I turned to one of the members of our party. "Go you behind the house and bring us our leggings and shirts. We have yet to take these dogs back to the lodge of their master, to whom they shall whine out their tale."

For in my arrogance of victory, which had gone more or less to my head, I was minded to make the discomfiture of the Shawnees complete by leading them straight to Elliott's tent and giving them into his hands. There could be no more fitting end to the night's work, I felt, than that. Hence so soon as I saw the Delaware slip about the corner of the house, I walked to where Gray Hawk still lay, nursing his hurts and attracted his attention by a shove of my moccasined foot.

"List ye, Shawnee," I began, "canst rise and walk to the camp or must we carry you back to your master like a woman?"

That flicked him, and he sought to rise. But he made a sorry matter of it since both his arms were useless, and I truly think he would have fallen had I not caught him and helped him to stand.

By that time the youth was back with our garments, and we donned them one by one while the others stood guard over the three Shawnees. That done we herded them into a group in our midst and were ready to set forth.

And in all that time neither Heckwelder nor the maid at his side had spoken. I glimpsed them both as I drew on my leggings and donned my shirt. And I glimpsed them again as I thrust my hatchet into its thrum-trimmed sheath.

It seemed to me that the white man was watching me closely with an almost puzzled, a slightly dazed expression on his face. And as for the maid, she stood seemingly waiting and no more. But her lips were pressed very close together and her eyes appeared narrowed, as they rested on the blood-smeared form of Gray Hawk, the Shawnee.

So I snapped my hatchet home in the sheath with something like a flourish and gave the word to march. The Shawnees among us we passed down the path in silence and moved off along the street.

And save for Metta's presence in Zeisberger's house, and the reason for it, which I, in my youthful folly had assumed the one possible cause, I should have been vastly content as I led my band back toward the camp. But that rankled still in my breast, nor could I put out of my mind the expression of her face as I had left her standing there beside the Moravian teacher.

It had been a thing which baffled my comprehension—which I could not understand. And yet dimly it seemed to me it had said without words, that in some way I had failed—had fallen short of something in her estimation—as though it were her and not myself, who was wounded, hurt in spirit by what had occurred.

But I did not understand, and because I did not, and felt she had flaunted my pride in going to Zeisberger's house rather than in staying in her own, my mood grew more and more morose, so that I think that in the end I was more wholly and completely a savage in my thoughts that night than ever before in my life.

Certain I am that I gave small thought to Gray Hawk's condition as I set the pace at which we made our way out of the town and that save for Nashoba and one of the

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other youths of my band, the man would probably have fallen from loss of blood and the weakness it produced.

And being all savage, I gave no thought to any other thing save the carrying out of the plan which had flashed into my brain back there in the town, after I had flung my vanquished foeman a-sprawl upon the ground. The glory of victory I had tasted, but I had not as yet sensed the thrill of an enemy's full humiliation, which now I intended to taste!

Hence when we reached the camp, now quiet and seemingly lifeless save for the food fires which once more shone here and there through their gathering film of ashes and gave off a warm breath of charring wood as we passed, I led the way straight toward Elliott's tent.

I remember that I smiled rather grimly too, as I noted a faint light inside it. Doubtless I thought he was waiting for Gray Hawk, the Black Snake and the Turtle to come creeping to him with word of their full success.

And I thought if he waited for that, he was apt to wait a long time since they had failed, and the noise of their failure being bruited abroad would in a sense at least tie his hands against a similar attempt in the future. Furthermore I did not think Pomoacan or Pipe would take kindly to what he had attempted when the matter reached their ears. Wherefore, all things taken into consideration, it was in nothing less than a wholly arrogant mood that I reached the front of the lighted tent, put forth a hand and flung back the fly.

CHAPTER XI

ELLIOTT sat within, clad in moccasins, fringed leggings and hunting-shirt trimmed with thrums, wrought of the softest doeskin and belted at the waist by a bead-wrought band from which hung the sheath of his knife, and beneath which a pistol was thrust.

He sat crouched on his log very much as he had the night before save that now he was smoking a short, black pipe. This he took from his lips as I thrust back the fly.

Then as he saw, not what he no doubt expected, but myself instead, he sprang to his feet and his hand dropped swiftly to the butt of the pistol.

"Stand, Delaware!" he broke forth in command. "What way is this to enter my tent?"

"At least, it is not a sneaking one, Captain," I gave him answer in a tone no whit more pleasant than his own, which once more struck fire to the tinder of my hatred of the man.

And having spoken I drew myself up, still holding the fly of the tent in my hand and waited his reply.

It came quickly enough in all conscience, though in a somewhat less irascible manner.

"What do you wish? Speak, now you are here."

"To return three of your men who appear to have wandered from the camp and fallen into trouble," I said more lightly. "They are without even now; shall I have them brought in?"

I watched him closely and I saw him start at my words. Oh yes, he couldn't help it. He knew then that some way his plan had gone amiss. Yet he could not tell what had happened, and he sought to feel his way I think, until he could know how complete was my knowledge.

"What do you mean?" he blustered. "By ——, why can't you talk like a white man, since you are white, instead of saying half a thing and leaving the rest to the imagination. Strip me if I know what you mean."

"Then I shall show you, Captain," I said, rather enjoying his patent unease.

I lifted the fly and spoke to the rest of my party, bidding them lead the three Shawnees inside.

Needs say they complied without any delay. They thrust the Turtle, Black Snake and Gray Hawk through the door and pressed close about it themselves that they might see and hear what occurred.

And surely there was nothing about those three to make glad the heart of the man who had sent them forth. Two of them were scowling like punished children and Gray Hawk staggered as he tried to hold himself steady on his feet. Moreover he was a ghastly sight as the light fell full upon him, his arms dangling at his side and the wound in the right gaping widely and still sending out a thin trickle of blood.

Elliott gave him one glance, and I saw his face go white. It did it oddly too, because the upper part flushed and the lower jaw and a ring about his mouth were suddenly drained of color. He took a single

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long breath and turned his eyes, hard, unblinking and full of a savage glitter toward me.

"What does it mean? What does this thing mean?" he said hoarsely and as though his own words choked in his throat.

But I smiled in his face.

"It means, Captain Elliott, that these three Shawnees strayed tonight from the camp and ran foul of a pack of wolves whose fangs were *not* broken. One of them was somewhat mangled before I and my men brought them back."

And as I spoke I saw his eyes change and felt that he noted the peculiar emphasis on the word "not" in my speech. Yet all he said when I had finished was to repeat his question.

"What do you mean? Haven't I told you to speak like a white?"

"Aye," said I, "you have done so. Wherefore I will obey so nearly as I can——"

"Obey!" he cut me short with a sneer. "By ——, that comes well from one of your clan. When did you ever obey, you rebellious Monseys?"

"Since you like not the word, I will change it," I went on. "I shall comply with your request, so nearly as I may, though of the white man's method of speech or action, I know little. This then is what occurred. I and my men came upon these Shawnees prowling about the house of the white teachers in the town. Fearing they might do them some harm, and remembering that Pomoacan who undertook this mission which has brought us here, had guaranteed the safety of these people and their lives, we acted in such fashion as to keep them safe from harm. Gray Hawk dared to question my valor as a warrior. We fought as man to man. The result you can see."

"Yes, —— my eyes and your overbold tongue," he rapped out when I paused. "And since when has the Wyandot set a guard about these canting white men's house?"

"Who says that he has done so?" I baited him a trifle farther. "Have I said so White Captain—I or any of my men?"

I think, too, that he saw he had gone a trifle far in the question since he dropped his voice somewhat and sought to explain.

"The fact that you and your men were in town would seem to need explanation as well as the presence of these others."

"You think then that their presence demands an explanation?" I returned and looked him in the eye. "There is also the matter of a tied pack found concealed outside the town and brought back by one of the Leni Lenape——"

So far I got before—

"Hell's furies," he cried and sprang toward me, yet paused before he had reached me quite and stood breathing deeply, until his nostrils flared, and I could see the cords of the muscles in his jaws as they ground his teeth together restraining what more he might have said.

But I had fought one man that night and was in no mood to give ground to another.

"Careful, Captain," I said to him softly. "I have played the white man so well as I am able since you desired that I should. It were a pity if I should forget the part and remember only that I am Indian raised."

"Do you dare to threaten me—me!" he blustered. "Do you dare—you—you——"

"Speak Captain," I prompted as he once more broke off, though his face was red with anger.

"You —— nameless white spawn," he spat forth the words.

"Delaware, Captain." I shook my head. "I am blood brother to the clan. Gray Wolf! I am called."

Nashoba stepped into the tent.

"This is my brother, Captain. He will confirm my words."

Elliott eyed him.

"Were you of this party also?" he asked.

"Aye," Nashoba gave him answer and folded his arms.

"And Gray Hawk and White Wolf fought as man to man?"

"Aye," my blood brother said.

"Then I wash my hands of the whole affair," Elliott roared, seeking I think yet to bluster the thing out, not fully certain how much we knew of his part in the affair and trying if so be he could to make it appear that the three men had been after all but a band of prowlers from the camp, even as I had made a sarcastical intimation that they were.

For now he turned upon them and his voice snarled as he spoke in command.

"Get ye gone. I shall have speech with you later. Take Gray Hawk and bind up his wounds. Strip me, but some one shall suffer for this night's affair."

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Nor did they make any response, those three, as they turned and stalked out of the tent with their wounded companion between them, save that their faces were dark, with the darkness which only an Indian visage knew how to take on in the face of injustice directed toward themselves. And as he went, Gray Hawk turned his eyes briefly to me, and I saw them glinting with a cold light of hatred between his lids.

THERE was no word spoken, however, until the Shawnees had disappeared. Then Elliott turned to Nashoba and me once more, drew a pouch of tobacco from the breast of his shirt and recharged his pipe.

"——," said he, "was there not trouble enough hereabouts already that you two should have started a feud such as this between the factions of the camp?"

"To start a feud was not our intention, Captain," I replied. "Our whole endeavor was to preserve the pledge of Pomoacan unbroken through any act of these prowling dogs."

He frowned as he drew on his pipe.

"Say you so?" he grumbled at length. "Look you, White Wolf, what does Pomoacan know about this?"

"Nothing—as yet!" I told him and folded my arms.

"Eh?" He opened his eyes and stared straight at me. "By ——, do you mean you acted on your own initiative in this?"

"Aye—I and my brother," I declared.

He nodded. Watching I saw his teeth grip down on the stem of his pipe, and a crafty look creep into his eyes. I know his heart must have been full both of chagrin and rage as he sat there and steadied his voice before he went on:

"That is well. I shall talk to these men. You heard me say so. So then—that is all."

That was equivalent to a dismissal. I looked at Nashoba and found his thin lips twisted into what seemed to me a slight smile as he rested his eyes on the white, who had once more taken his seat. But I was in no mood to let him think that we did not know the whole depths of his treacherous attempt. I turned my gaze back from Gray Wolf to the British agent.

"Aye, that is all, save that the pack which was found was tied by Gray Hawk and hidden outside the town."

That fetched him again, for he took his pipe out of his mouth and sat watching me out of narrowed lids.

"How know ye this?" he asked.

"Gray Hawk was seen to place it where it was found," I replied. "It is rumored you had assigned the Shawnee a mission toward the Sciota."

"And where is that pack now?" he said without shifting his eyes.

"At the place of our brother who found it and brought it back to the camp, Captain Elliott," I said.

"You —— sneaking spy!"

Before I sensed his intention he had sprung to his feet, lifted his hand and struck me in the face, so that I staggered back from the force of the blow. At last his rage, his passion of disappointment and the full force of the knowledge that I had been rather enjoying his confusion, as I think, had completely overcome all control in the man and he struck me very much as one might slap at a nagging fly which had heckled him past endurance.

And looking back I am glad now to record that despite the stinging pain of his blow on my flesh and the hot resentment which boiled in my heart, I yet kept myself in hand so far as any overt act of retaliation was concerned.

I recovered my balance, drew myself up and faced him where he stood pale, half-crouched and breathing quickly, but with tight-set lips.

"It is well White Wolf does not forget you are an agent of the father at Detroit, Captain Elliott," I spoke out of my bruised and bleeding mouth. "Yet the father's agent should not forget that a wolf is not like a dog to crouch whimpering at heel under its master's hand."

The man relaxed as I spoke and straightened, laying a hand once more to the butt of the pistol in his belt.

And I laughed, shortly, turning on my heel.

"Come, Gray Wolf, my brother," I said. "Let us go to our place in the camp and guard there that pack which our captains, Pomoacan and Pipe, may find of interest in the morning."

I lifted the fly and passed out to my party with Nashoba at my back. Telling my men to loosen their hatchets and have them ready, I led them through the Shawnees section of the camp and regained our own

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And there Red Wing was waiting with the pack he had been ordered to find and bring back. I took it from him with a word of praise for his work and dismissed him with the others, cautioning them to say nothing concerning their part in the undertaking, since to Elliott, at least, I was sure their identity was unknown. Carrying the pack Nashoba and I made our way to our place where Sheshequins, wrapped in his blanket, lay stretched in sleep.

Throwing the pack on the ground, I sat down. Nashoba sank at my side.

"You are a warrior, little brother," he said in his soft, guttural voice. "Never saw I a prettier fight."

That was praise indeed, and my heart went out to him and his words, the more perhaps because I was sore in spirit, and now that the work of the moment was no longer with me to make me forget, I was thinking of Metta again.

"But you have added one enemy to another, and one who may do you much harm should he will," Nashoba went on.

"Elliott?" I said.

"Aye."

"He is no more an enemy now than before," I replied. "Who aims at the wolf's mate strikes at the wolf."

"Aye," said Nashoba again. "Yet now being aware that you know the thing he intended, he will hate you for yourself."

"That is true," I agreed.

In reality I think Sheshequins had been sleeping with one eye and only one ear. For now as on the night before he aroused and sat up, throwing off his blankets to question us concerning what we had done.

AND as on the night preceding we told him what had occurred, the more so that now as our spirits cooled, we began to realize more fully what the results of our acts might be. Wherefore we told him all from first to last.

"Young blood seeks to scale a cliff, where old blood goes around," he made comment when we were done. "Young blood adds fuel to the fire where old blood seeks to scatter the brands. And a man forgets not an injury done him or a plan brought to naught, nor a blow he gives to another in anger. Ye have done not wisely my son. A man may not pass over a challenge to his valor. Hence White Wolf could do no less than defend his place before this Hawk.

"Yet it was not wise to flaunt your success before the eyes of Elliott. It had been better to lead his dogs to their camp and let them crawl on their bellies to his tent to have their wounds bound up."

As he spoke I sensed that his voice was troubled.

"What think you this white man will do, my father?" Nashoba questioned as Sheshequins came to an end.

"He will speak concerning this affair with a double tongue after the manner of the whites," Sheshequins declared. "Wherefore I think it were best to lay the matter before our captain and the Wyandot in the morning, ere the father's agent gains their ear. Unless I mistake he will lodge complaints against ye both—which must be heard and judged. Wherefore since those facts first known persist the longest, he who speaks first has the same advantage as he who in battle plants the first numbing blow."

"The words of Sheshequins, my father, are good words," I said.

He turned his face.

"Save that Welsheetmonet give a man no power of comprehension, the years teach each man something," he replied. "I have lived many years longer than thou, my little white son. And always have I thought for thy good since first I saved ye from death against the bole of a tree. Tell me, my son, do you love this Moravian maid?"

"Aye, my father," I said.

"Tell me of her," he required.

And I complied, telling him what I knew.

He sighed softly when I was done.

"In this I see the hand of Welsheetmonet," he said. "She is virgin, nor have you looked upon a woman, as I know who have questioned the reason of it in my heart. My son, have you heard of the Secret Children of the tribes?"

"Aye, somewhat I have heard," I made answer with a strange grip swelling in my throat.

"They are the pure of heart," Sheshequins went on almost as though speaking to himself. "A mother may at birth put away her child and deny it to herself so that it is raised by foster-parents, not knowing its parentage or name. So are they held pure from birth. And having reached adolescence and become man and woman in the fulness of time, such a man and woman

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may meet and mate and return to their own people to produce a pure strain of blood which shall be fresh and undefiled.

"My son, in somewhat at least you and this maid are like them to my thinking, in that ye both are of a race, have been both raised by foster-parents—have remained pure through adolescence, and man and maid come here now together for the first time, and having come together, know desire."

"My father," I said scarcely above a whisper as the picture he drew filled my brain.

I had heard the story of the Secret Children ere this, but never had I thought of Metta and myself in any such fashion before. And now I found the thing taking root in my heart and making it glad.

"Wherefore," Sheshequins resumed, "I think that I shall say something of this nature in speaking to our captain and to the Wyandot in the morning. For surely a man has right of protection for the woman who is his or promised to him, and should he strike a blow in such a cause, it is a good blow, let it fall where it may. You have this pack of the Shawnee safe?"

"Aye, my father," said Gray Wolf and myself as one.

"Keep it so, that I may have it in the morning as proof of those things you have told me," he admonished, and stretched himself out once more.

Nashoba and I followed suit. But I did not sleep. Rather I lay staring into the night, my thoughts in the town with the woman I had left in anger, yet thought of now as my mate, chosen for me by a higher power than my own desire or my ability to take and hold her. And my body thrilled with the sense that tonight at least I had been strong to shield her from the plot Elliott had formed for gaining her for himself.

Just what steps Elliott might take in the matter, I could not foresee. Sheshequins plainly expected him to do something about it rather than permit it to lie as it was. That might or might not be, but that night, lying sleepless beside my foster-brother and father, I smiled rather grimly as I thought of the time I had spent in Elliott's tent and smiling, found my lips stiff from the blow he had struck me on the mouth.

How furious I had made him might be measured by that, for unless he had been beside himself with anger, he would not have forgotten what the white leaders of the red man had ever to remember—that there were some things in the code of our lives with which they must not interfere, and that an Indian's pride would not permit him to take a blow unless he returned it at once, or failing that, at some future time. And then I smiled again and thought of Metta and came back once more to Elliott.

Metta was white and so was I. It might be possible that Elliott had thought of me so, rather than as a member of the Delaware clan of Wolves, when he hurled his fist against my mouth. Well, as a matter of fact, I was white—and so was my maid of the red-brown hair. I stretched my limbs and felt their muscles grow tense and rigid. What was it Sheshequins had said: that the men and women of the Secret Ones mated and went back to their people? I found the notion of interest and continued to ponder upon it until I slept.

CHAPTER XII

SHESHEQUINS' judgment of Elliott's character was, as the next morning was to prove, correct. I imagine the man must have felt he could not ignore what had occurred, in view of the fact that Nashoba being the son of a Delaware subchief, as well as my foster-brother, and also that we had mentioned our possession of Gray Hawk's pack.

He must have spent a fairly restless night deciding on his course too, I think, now that his plan had failed and left him in a far different position from what would have otherwise been his. Had he succeeded he would no doubt have taken the stand that the thing was the work of men, worn weary with the bickerings of the council, who sought to break the deadlock and remove its cause by their act.

Thus he would have divided the blame for what had happened with Pomoacan at least, whether it had been proved that the murders were done by the Shawnees or not. And it would have been very doubtful really whether it would have been fully brought home to their doors, except in suspicions, possibly aroused by the absence of Gray Hawk himself.

But having failed, his men having been led back captive to his tent, Gray Hawk

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showing only too plainly the results of his participation in the attempt, and his pack being even now in the Delawares' hands, not only would it be known from what element of the camp the plan had sprung, but Pomoacan and the Moravians also would be forewarned against the success of any future attempt.

Not only that, but I am as sure now as I was then, that Elliott was worried by my references to wolves whose teeth were not broken, and my mention of the mission of Gray Hawk to the Sciota, though he may have connected that last merely with the report he had directed the Shawnee to circulate as an explanation of his absence when he was missed.

All things taken together, Elliott found his position none too pleasant that next day, and set about changing it boldly. And as Sheshequins had suggested, he chose the method of the double tongue to gain his ends.

The cooking fires had barely served their mission the next morning, the third of the Autumnal moon as we called it—or September as I know it now, when he sent a Shawnee to demand speech with Captain Pipe and the Wyandot half-king in his tent.

"Bring also the adopted member of the Delawares, called White Wolf, and Nashoba and his father Sheshequins, the subchief," his message ran.

Sheshequins told me, since he heard it, being even then in council with Pipe and Pomoacan about the events of the night.

As a result one of the younger Delawares came and told Nashoba and me where we were loitering about our fire, inquiring between ourselves as to what form Elliott's action might take.

We looked into one another's eyes as the messenger departed.

"Lies, and more lies," growled the Gray Wolf.

"What else since he has naught else to his hand?" I replied.

Rising, we scanned the camp, sighted Sheshequins, Pipe and Pomoacan moving toward Elliott's tent, and joined their party with small delay, walking in silence behind them until they paused beneath the flag which flapped from its staff in a gentle breeze.

"Enter, Chiefs of the Delawares and Wyandots, and those two with ye for whom I have sent," Elliott spoke.

We crowded into the tent.

Elliott rose. Besides himself there were present one or two Shawnee subchiefs, the Turtle, Black Snake and Gray Hawk with his arms bound up.

Elliott signed us to seat ourselves and began his complaint at once.

"My heart is sore, my brothers of the Delawares and the Wyandots, to call you here this morning, that we may consult concerning a serious turn of affairs. For though we are not agreed in the council, yet is it my desire that harmony should prevail among all the father's people gathered together here in the camp. And it is displeasing to me that aught should occur which may give rise to trouble among you. Wherefore I have summoned you here to my tent so soon as I might without disturbing your rest.

"Will my brother, Captain Pipe, and my brother, Pomoacan, gaze upon these three men of the Shawnees who sit before you. One of them is sorely wounded as you may see. And his wounds, my brothers, are the work of a member of the Delaware party—an adopted member, yet no less a member of your clan.

"Last night he and the son of my brother Sheshequins, and some of the young men of their tribe, brought Gray Hawk and his two brothers to my tent. And the White Wolf boasted that he had done Gray Hawk physical harm. He furthermore told what appeared a fanciful story of having been led to the act through intervening between the Shawnees before you, and an attack upon the teachers of the praying Indians in the town.

"After he had sung his song and departed, I questioned these men and learned the truth which I now will speak, that my words may enter your heart, and bring understanding to your minds.

"As ye know, many of our party have attended the meetings held by these people in their church house each night. Wherefore it seems that Gray Hawk and his brothers have come into an argument among themselves concerning certain of the teachers' sayings, so that they could not decide which was right and which wrong and agreed among themselves to go to the teachers and ask them to judge between them that their minds might be clear in understanding. This they did last night.

"But upon approaching the teacher's

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house they were attacked without warning by a party consisting of White Wolf, Gray Wolf and four other men of the Leni Lenape —and though they yielded without resistance, yet did White Wolf provoke Gray Hawk into a quarrel wherein his reputation as a Shawnee and a warrior was at stake. Thereafter he wounded Gray Hawk in fight, and afterward broke the bone in his arm, while Gray Hawk stood at his mercy. My brothers, I have spoken. My brothers of the Shawnees have I spoken true words?"

"Aye, thy words are true words, white brother," the Turtle said.

"Then have I spoken truly," Elliott went on, before he took his seat. "My brothers, what should be done with the men who have done this thing, that such things may not happen again, while we spread our blankets in this place?"

Pomoacan rose.

"As thou sayest, thy words are true words, agent of the father, and it is not for Pomoacan to doubt the words which ye speak. Yet before making answer to the question thy lips have spoken, Pomoacan would esteem it a favor were he permitted to question somewhat more concerning this thing."

Elliott nodded.

"I have called you to take counsel together, my brother," he said.

"Nashoba," Pomoacan turned. "Son of Sheshequins, the Delaware, I would speak with thee first."

Nashoba rose and stood waiting.

"Ye had a part in this affair?"

"Aye, Pomoacan."

Nashoba folded his arms and lifted his head.

"You have heard the words of the father's agent, which are the words of the men of the Shawnees. What say you to them, son of Sheshequins?"

"That they are true in part." Nashoba shifted his gaze toward the men Pomoacan had named. "Yet would I ask also why if they but went in peace to ask of the teachers a question, they chose a time when all lights were out in the town, and slunk to their gate in single-file in the manner of them who attack?"

"The question is good," Pomoacan declared as Nashoba made an end.

Myself, I wondered how Elliott might like this first blow struck against his account of what had occurred last night, wherein he had so cleverly blended the true and the false to make the Shawnees appear the injured party, ourselves the aggressors and himself no more than one who sought to play the mediator's part. Truly I had thought as I listened to his words, Sheshequins had been right in saying the man would speak with a double tongue.

SAVE for dark looks and shifty eyes, the Shawnees made no effort to answer the point Nashoba had raised. As Pomoacan turned his eyes slowly from one to another, they maintained a stony silence, and, after a time, the Wyandot went on.

"Tell me, Nashoba, if it be true as I have heard, that a pack, with its ties securely fastened as in readiness for a journey, was found near the town by a man of the Delawares and brought back to the camp."

"Aye," said Gray Wolf, "such a pack was found."

"Was it learned to whom it belonged?"

"Aye. It belonged to Gray Hawk—the man yonder with bandaged arms."

"I had assigned the man a mission to the Sciota to report the progress of our council to my brother McKee," Elliott broke in.

Pomoacan inclined his head.

"Wherefore Gray Hawk perchance but laid down his pack outside the town with his brothers to question the teachers that his heart might be at rest concerning their answer, though his feet were on the trail. So then I have finished."

He resumed his seat.

Pipe rose.

"Have I Captain Elliott's permission to question the adopted son of my tribe?" he inquired.

And Elliott could scarce refuse him under the conditions, though I judged by his face he was none too well pleased, and I thought he had not liked the ring of the Wyandot's final words.

"Speak, Captain Pipe," he gave his assent.

"White Wolf," said Pipe, and I rose. "What say you; did you fight with the Shawnee Gray Hawk as it is said?"

"Aye," I replied. "That I fought with him is true, and should his heart thirst for vengeance, I will fight with him again when he is recovered."

"You allege that you thought the men of

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the Shawnees designed to do the teachers harm?" Pipe asked.

"Aye," said I. "Wherefore I and my brothers lay in wait as a guard about the white man's house."

"Your reason for suspecting so treacherous an action!" Pipe broke forth scowling as he spoke.

"A bit of talking paper as the first sign on the trail, oh, my Captain," I responded. "A bit of the white man's talking paper with the names of men of the Shawnee written thereon."

"What names?"

He barked it at me.

"The names of Gray Hawk, Black Snake and the Turtle," I replied, sensing now to the full the subtle purpose of the two chiefs in showing Elliott how fully they knew the truth of the matter, without telling him in words, that he lied, which as the father's agent they felt they dared not do.

"You have that bit of talking paper?" Pipe next demanded.

"Aye," I agreed.

And suddenly he dropped the matter and gave me a surprise.

"White Wolf, know you a maid of these Moravians, who is white like yourself?"

But though it was so unexpected, I answered him—

"Aye."

"You have looked upon her as a woman?"

"Aye."

"Has the maid looked upon you as a man?"

"We are promised the one to the other," I replied.

Pipe stood for a moment and then he went on.

"This I have heard. Also has it come to my ears that the maid is a maiden truly of a purity enduring from birth. Wherefore my heart is glad that you have found her, and found her good in your eyes. I am done."

He sank slowly back to his seat and I resumed my own, marveling once more at the ease with which he had served notice upon Elliott that he sanctioned my union with the maid, and hence in a sense gave to her the same protection which was mine as a member of his clan. That too must have been a bitter draft for Elliott to swallow, and I noted that his color was somewhat heightened as he began:

"Your young men, my brothers, appear to have held their story ready on the tip of the tongue. Yet does it not answer my question now that it is told."

And at that Pomoacan rose.

"Then shall Pomoacan answer it," he said. "We have listened to the words of the agent of the father, which are the words of the Shawnees, and true words as they have said. And we have given ear to the answers of Gray Wolf, the son of Sheshequins, of the Delawares, and to those of White Wolf, the blood-son of the tribe.

"Wherefore it appears that White Wolf and his blood-brother did but endeavor to make good the words of his captain and of Pomoacan to these praying people, that no harm should come to them or to their teachers throughout the course of this affair. Were they mistaken in their zeal it is to be regretted, yet not so greatly as had they been lacking in the spirit which inspired their act.

"Wherefore Pomoacan could not find it in his heart to inflict punishment upon men of his own or another clan whose intent was but to hold unbroken the pledge Pomoacan has spoken at another time, that these people should be to him as his fathers. Let us then agree between us that we shall each keep a more careful watch over his people while yet this thing shall endure, to the end that such things may not happen again."

To be wrong and to be beaten is a thing to try the heart of man be he red or white. And Elliott was after all but a man. As Pomoacan sat down his face flamed to a purple crimson. He had failed, and he knew it, and more than that he knew that Pomoacan and Pipe knew far more concerning the matter of the night before than they had said. Hence he fell back on a threat.

"Watch your men if you will, my brothers," he said. "Yet can I not answer for the Shawnees. Their blood has been spilled—and the one who has spilled it is known."

"I have spoken," Pomoacan said.

"I have spoken," said Pipe, and signed to us to rise.

We passed out of the tent and left Elliott there with his Shawnees, and went back to our part of the camp.

But I think it was that early morning scene in Elliott's tent which put the black

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rage into his heart which he carried to the council later in the day, and so precipitated the events which came to pass. I believe that he went to the Long House with a red lust for that revenge of which he had thus far been balked.

Nor did the council last long. From the very first Elliott rushed things toward the conclusion he desired. Taking the floor at the start, he once more uttered his demands, going to more extreme lengths than any of which he had as yet been guilty. He openly stated that he considered the Wyandots as in rebellion to the wishes of Detroit. He declared that Pomoacan alone had delayed the matter from first to last, and turning suddenly upon him spoke to him direct. Nashoba and I who had found a place near one of the windows, could both see what occurred and hear what Elliott said:

"You who have taken the father's mission to perform have delayed its fulfilling upon pretext after pretext through the weeks. Yours is the fault that we find ourselves not back in our houses with the matter already done. It is because you are not man enough to think for yourself, but allow yourself to be swayed by every chance word that you have not made your heart strong to perform the task to which you were assigned.

"Therefore speaking for the father, I say to you this: unless you comply at once with his wishes in this matter, you and yours shall fall beneath his displeasure. And it may even come to pass that the Wyandot tribe shall find themselves in the position of these praying people, who have stood already too long in the father's path. They may be asked to remove their houses to another place than that where they spread their blankets now.

"It may even come that they shall suffer the wrath of the father when he learns that Pomoacan promises one thing with his lips and does another with his hands. Wherefore let Pomoacan and the Wyandots take these words to their hearts and consider them well, lest a heavy fate befall them. I, the father's agent, have spoken. It is for you to reply."

That was the threat of vengeance direct. I sensed it as Elliott's last card, played now when all others had failed. I glanced at Pomoacan where he sat, dark of visage, sullen and scowling before the fact that he should be so berated in the presence of his men.

Then while I watched, as weeks before he rose slowly without other reply, spoke to his subchiefs, turned on Elliott a glance of hardly controlled rage and stalked from the house with his party in his train.

Nashoba shook his head.

"Now are the beans burning!" he growled. "Thou and I tipped the pot last night, little brother, and now has this white man kicked it wholly over. Pomoacan can ill stomach such words as the head of his clan."

I recalled a fact I had given little notice before.

"The sun rose red this morning, Gray Wolf," I said.

"Aye, and it will sink red tonight if the Wyandot looses those thoughts which lie feathered in his breast," he replied. "This Elliott is a fool or a very brave man."

"He is the king's agent," I responded.

Nashoba frowned.

"Aye, that is his strength," he agreed.

THE council broke up at once and its members streamed out of the Long House, most of them going toward the camp. Elliott, I noted, walked alone, with not even our leader, Pipe, by his side. I think he felt the atmosphere his words had raised around him too, for he shifted his eyes this way and that as he left the council, like a man who half-expects attack.

I turned from my place at the window.

"Where now?" Nashoba said.

I told him I was going to the school. For in truth what with my thoughts of the night and our talk with Sheshequins on the matter and the words of Captain Pipe of that morning, my heart was burning to see my Moravian maid.

My foster-brother shrugged.

"That is well," he agreed. "It were well also, I think, little brother, should you arrange to remain in the town until this matter is settled."

I gave him a glance.

"Think you White Wolf is afraid?" I broke out.

"Nay—yet no man walks among serpents if he may avoid them," he made answer. "Wherefore let Nashoba watch in the camp while you remain here."

"I shall consider my brother's words,"

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I said, and he turned and left me, joining a band of Delawares as I took myself toward the school.

And on this day I did not loiter without it, but strode boldly to its door and stood until Metta lifted her eyes and saw me, left her place and came toward me across the length of the floor.

"Good day," White Wolf," she greeted me in the manner of the whites—then catching sight of my cut and puffed lips, paused and widened her eyes and went on with a question—

"You have wounded your mouth?"

"The fist of a white man paid me so for leading back his dogs which had strayed from his camp," I said.

"Elliott!" she cried, the color draining from her cheeks.

"Aye, Elliott, I replied.

She stepped closer to me, and once more her hand lay on my arm.

"White Wolf did not understand last night," she said softly. "It was not that Macksithannes feared for herself, but that the teacher, Heckwelder, thy friend, White Wolf, and mine, thought best that she come to his house rather than lie in her own."

My heart leaped as I looked into her face.

"White Wolf's heart was hot with the work to his hands." I accepted her explanation, "As Macksithannes says, he did not understand. Yet now he does so and is glad. Also he admits the wisdom of his friend in placing Macksithannes doubly under guard. The words White Wolf spoke last night were the words of a too-ready tongue."

"It is passed," said my maid, and seemed for the first time to catch sight of the broken council passing through the streets.

She turned her face back to mine.

"Is the talking over? Have they come to some agreement concerning us?"

I told her what had occurred.

"And what will Pomoacan do?" she questioned when I was done.

"I know not, Macksithannes," I made answer.

"But—he has done what he could. He can not be asked to sacrifice his own people. He must yield now," she went on.

Her words were my thoughts.

"I fear, Macksithannes," I said.

Metta clasped her hands. Her gaze roved about the village, about the room where the children still sat watching us out of their sharp black eyes. At the last she set her lips and her color ebbed and flowed beneath her soft skin from her emotion.

"He is a man without mercy—without compassion, or honor or justice," she began. He is a fiend out of *Biskoonah*—an evil spirit, White Wolf—this man with the eyes of a snake."

"Hush," I stayed her. "You are mine. I stand between you and him."

"Aye," she said, and then. "Hark! What is that?"

One of her hands crept up and lay above her heart.

But I made no answer. I, too, was standing, straining my ears toward a tumult of shouting, the cry of angry voices which rose from the camp.

And then sharp, brief, yet not to be mistaken, the sound of a shot stabbed our ears.

TO BE CONCLUDED

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The Rag and the Roaring Giant

Author of "Tactics," "The Blindness of Quill McHenry," etc.

PETER LAPIVITCH fairly typified the roaring giant. He came from somewhere in the dark interior of Russia where he had sworn a reluctant fealty to the Little Father. Peter would have said that his home town was called Ust Sisolsk, and that it stood on the left bank of the river Witchejda. As a matter of fact he lived twenty miles north of that place, in a woefully sterile country, where for years he had strenuously tried to feed and clothe a wife and numerous progeny with the proceeds realized from two acres of very scrawny land. From the very start the business of living was a herculean task for Peter, and nature made sport of his best efforts.

Agriculture beat him at last and he went in for charcoal burning. In this business he came by the name of "Fire Devil." As he tended his kilns by day and by night—for living was a twenty-four-hour-a-day job for Peter—he looked for all the world like a monster of flame and soot sprung from the nethermost regions. He was the ogre of the countryside, and peasant women frightened their refractory children into order and obedience by the bare mention of his name.

But even the fires Peter kindled in his kilns disputed his efforts to keep body and soul together and the returns were meager indeed. What of his substance was left by the tax agents was levied against by the police for their own individual uses. No one in the entire province lived fatter or with less effort than General Ivan Dronsky, the commissioner of the Government.

In such a land it was natural that Peter should imbibe distrust of government with the very milk that passed his infant lips, and as he grew older and wiser in the ways of things he came to hate government with his whole soul. He joined the federation where hate was taught by masters. Yet Peter made no visible display of his hatred for fear of the silence of bleak Siberia. He talked to his wife Tetla and spoke in the councils of the federation of the hatred that burned within him, but otherwise he kept his mouth closed.

Thus life to Peter Lapivitch was indeed a hopeless, colorless thing, and he frequently longed for the courage to curse his God for creating him to such misery.

Then one day there came to the province where Peter lived a stranger from over the sea. This man went about the province telling wonderful, glowing, apparently miraculous, tales that were hard for the simple folk of the province to comprehend. The tales were of a land across the sea where

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every man was rich and where all the boys were potential rulers. The stranger explained that those who employed him desired strong men to work in steel mills in a city called Pittsburgh and they would pay six rubles a day for the most ordinary labor. Six rubles!

"Three dollars a day! Think of it!" said the stranger in his enthusiasm, lapsing into his mother tongue.

Peter and Tetla, his wife, talked over the stranger's proposition for a day or so, then Peter informed the stranger that he would take his family and go with him to that city across the sea.

Transition from a sterile two-acre farm in the interior of Russia to a burning, smoking city in the Alleghanies was a matter of less than a month. The passage from a port on the Black Sea was made in a steamer chartered for the occasion by the stranger, and Peter Lapivitch and his family herded in the bowels of that steamer with mankind, womankind, and childrenkind from all the south of Europe.

"Now you woman and kids, listen to me," said Peter in the vernacular when the last of many obliging agents had showed them to a neat, five-room cottage hard by the big steel mills. "We are in free America where we get our bread and meat till we die. We forget everything and start new. —— that Russia. You hear me?"

Incorporated in those few, crisp sentences was henceforth to be the law of Peter Lapivitch's household. Forget and begin anew. That was the law. All political ties were to be severed and forgotten as if they had never existed. Peter sought and hoped for complete amalgamation with this new land.

Now Peter Lapivitch was eminently fitted to take charge of and tend a battery of coke ovens. That was his profession and he gloried in it for the sake of art. A number of his countrymen had preceded Peter to this new land, but somehow Peter was not one of them; he was different. While most of his countrymen neighbors were warped one way or another by an incessant struggle with adversity, Peter was upstanding and massive.

Six-feet-three he stood in his bare feet, with a shoulder spread of thirty-four inches. His lungs were bellows. A heavy black beard shielded his swarthy face, yet the beard was insufficient to conceal a grim, thick-lipped mouth. The nose of him was broad and flat like that of an ape, and his black eyes burned and snapped from an ambush of beetling brows. In his two long arms lay the strength of half a dozen ordinary men; while others used the mules to shift the little coke cars about the kiln tracks, Peter used his own brawn. He was in fact, the personification of the roaring giant.

Peter began his living where all must begin their living in a new land, at the very beginning. His children were put to school to begin their reformation. Peter was immensely proud of his children's status; that was well on the road of his desire to put aside all that had gone before to take up what was to come. The struggle to live back in bleak Russia was a bitter memory to Peter and he wished to expunge it from his mind. Back there one might labor a lifetime and have nothing at the end; here one had but to be faithful and be amply rewarded.

To Peter the three dollars a day he received as tender of the coke ovens was magnificent; it was far and away beyond his wildest dreams. The Little Father might perchance possess more of worldly goods, but it is doubtful whether he was as appreciative as Peter when on Saturday night he received his envelop containing eighteen dollars. Moreover, there was frequently overtime to be put in and that meant additional dollars.

At the end of the day, after a hearty supper, when Peter sat with his pipe between his teeth and his shoeless feet perched atop the table, it was his custom to look about him appraisingly. Deep down in his big heart he pitied that portion of mankind as represented by myriads of his countrymen who were cursed with the inability to get out of Russia and into this great country where life meant so much. In his many talks with Tetla, his wife, on the subject of their good fortune, it was the habit of Peter to pause at a certain point and sweep his arm eloquently about the room in which they chanced to be sitting at the time. It was indeed a home beyond compare.

AT THE end of two years Peter had received his second set of naturalization papers from the Government and was now a citizen with full privileges. At the end of that time Peter also had an

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intelligent grasp of the language of his adopted country. Further, he possessed a comfortable account at the bank. The two years had not been without its promotions for Peter and at present he was a roller in the rail department drawing four dollars a day.

The little home had taken on added luster and conveniences. In season there was a truck garden in the back yard and a big bed of flowers in the front yard. The front porch boasted a mass of clinging clematis. The children now wore shoes the year 'round if they chose, and Tetla had two new dresses a year instead of one new dress every two years. Peter himself occasionally donned a neat black suit and wore a low standing collar.

Nor were social affairs neglected. Tetla became a frequent caller and hostess. The older children attended dances and parties around the neighborhood. Peter joined a lodge of his countrymen and was elected outer sentinel. One night each week he sat in the outer court of the lodge and exercised his official functions. The authority in him vested was symbolized by the red collar drooped over his shoulders and by the sword he held in his hand.

And so lived Peter Lapivitch and his family.

"Now we are Americans for sure, Tetla," said Peter on the occasion of his promotion to foreman of the plate yards.

The remuneration in the new position was six dollars a day. From that moment Peter began to wake and stretch himself.

With gratitude eating at his heart Peter became aware of a desire to reciprocate in some manner; he wished to show his appreciation for the many gifts rendered. How was this to be done? In Russia he would have sent gifts to the commissioner of the province and given the local police certain material bounties; but in America it was otherwise. Peter thought about this for some time, then one evening while he sat smoking, Stepan, the seven-year-old, approached Peter with an open book.

"My teacher, she say that are the father of his country," informed Stepan, pointing a chubby finger at the picture he held before his father's eyes.

Peter always showed a marked interest in what his children had to say.

"Tell me about dat faller, Stepan," he invited, taking Stepan on his knee.

So Stepan entered into a glowing account of General Washington.

"Teacher, she say he make the whole country great like she are," concluded Stepan.

For some time after Stepan had finished his recital Peter gazed steadily at the picture in the book, then he took the book from Stepan's hand and kissed the picture rapturously.

"Dat's him, Stepan; by damn!" he exploded. "We hang dat faller on de wall, wot you say?"

Forthwith Peter carefully removed the picture of General Washington from the book, much to the disgust and consternation of Stepan, and tacked it on the wall.

"You be lak dat faller some day, Stepan," asserted Peter as he stood back to observe the picture from a distance.

He beamed on his offspring with such good effect that Stepan was sufficiently mollified to cease crying and beam back.

"Sure, Stepan, you be lak dat faller some time. Just you wait."

Suddenly, upon dropping his gaze to the floor, Peter's face went dark and his thick lips twisted into a snarl. The book had fallen to the floor and lay open. A bearded man looked up into Peter's eyes. He was a man with weak, watery eyes and a pusillanimous mouth. The picture was labeled—

CZAR OF RUSSIA

The many years of toil and hardship, of hunger, of exploitation at the hands of Government tax agents and indignities at the hands of the police swept through Peter Lapivitch. With a muffled cry of rage he stooped and caught up the book, plucked the offending picture of the bearded man therefrom and tore it to shreds.

Back in Russia that act, were it observed by agents of the Government, would have earned Peter years of hard labor in the Siberian salt mines; here in free America it brought to Peter a profound sense of work well performed. As he ground the bits of paper into the carpet with his boot heel he laughed sardonically. Stepan's outcries at such wanton destruction were silenced with a coin from Peter's pocket.

"—— dat faller, Stepan! You hear me?" burst from Peter.

Stepan said nothing in reply as he danced off to the corner confectionery.

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Thenceforth in the house of Peter Lapivitch the name of Nicholas was banned; it was uttered under penalty of Peter's displeasure. Thereafter General Washington became the all. Never a morning did Peter take up his dinner-pail to depart for the mills that he did not pause to look into the stern face of General Washington; never did Peter return in the evening that he did not pass a cheery word to "dat —— good ole faller."

General Washington became an idol and was worshiped on a par with God. And why not? To Peter Lapivitch, the roaring giant from Russia, General Washington typified free America. By honoring General Washington Peter believed that he was honoring free America, and by honoring free America he believed that he was showing a small portion of his appreciation for the many things free America had done for him.

Rough though it may have been, that was nevertheless the logic of Peter. Perchance Peter would have gone on endless days paying daily homage to General Washington as the proxy of free America had not something intervened. To some it would have counted as nothing; to Peter it was everything. And here again it was Stepan who played an unconscious part in shaping Peter Lapivitch's life.

Came Flag Day. When Stepan returned home from school that afternoon he carried a little muslin flag tacked to a stick. Stepan joyfully presented the flag to his father's gaze that evening after supper. Peter spoke no word; he merely took the flag from Stepan's hand and looked at it earnestly and thoughtfully, his gaze now and then straying from the flag to the stern face of General Washington on the wall. Was that a smile and a nod of assurance from the general? Peter believed that it was, but of course he had no way of knowing certainly.

In silence, with the little flag in his hand, Peter rose to his feet and went out alone and sat on the front steps of his house. He fixed his gaze on the distant hills. A new spirit had come over him; it was a spirit that gripped him and laid strong hands on his heart. Nor did Peter resist; he had no desire to resist. The spirit seemed to intoxicate him with a new sort of intoxication that was very pleasing. Peter's crude processes of reasoning could not quite fathom this spirit, but he felt its presence as he had never before felt anything; it was a thing that seemed alive, for it tugged at him and caused him to glow inwardly.

Peter's eyes dropped to the flag he held in his hand, the scrap of tri-colored bunting that Stepan had brought from school. Looking at it questioningly for a time Peter at last touched it awkwardly with the tips of his coarse fingers. A thrill shot through him. Time and time again he had touched the holy icons, that is true, and each time he had been thrilled by that touch; but the thrill he now felt as his fingers came in contact with the little flag was altogether different.

The holy icons represented something that Peter acknowledged in a vague sort of way, but it was a something that seemed very distant. The scrap of bunting, this flag he held in his hand, was in no way vague to Peter; he felt that it was not so much a symbol of something as it was the something itself.

WHAT was it? For a long, long time Peter sat silently thinking over that, knitting his brows and shaking his head in a puzzled fashion. Then at last a great light broke over him and he smiled triumphantly. How simple was the solution of the problem. This flag he held was itself a great nation; it was itself the hands and heads and hearts of the millions who had created and maintained it; it was the tribute of blood paid for liberty. Men and women of every breed and creed had forged that flag, and here sat Peter Lapivitch holding in his very hands the souls of millions of brave men and women, the living and the dead.

It was free America he held in his hands. If viewed from certain angles that might have been an astonishing revelation, but as a matter of fact it was no revelation at all; it was simply the awakening of the spirit that had lain dormant in Peter Lapivitch ever since that day when he had stood at the rail of the incoming steamer and seen the statue on Bedloe's Island for the first time.

Many days had this spirit smoldered within Peter to burst into flame at last at the touch of a colored rag. He knew now that the flag and the nation were one and the same thing; they were absolutely indivisible. Remove one and the other is lost;

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add to one and the other becomes greater proportionately.

In a passion of joy and thankfulness Peter caught the little flag to his breast and blessed it through his bearded lips. Then he carried it into the house and laid it tenderly away with the holy icons.

It was perhaps two weeks later that Peter again sat on the front steps of his house. It was Sunday morning. People were streaming by on their way to church. With one and all Peter exchanged a word or a nod of greeting, and after each word or nod his gaze invariably wandered aloft. Those following Peter's gaze found themselves looking at Old Glory tugging like a thing alive at its halyards at the top of a fifty-foot pole planted in Peter's front yard.

Nearly a week's pay had gone into the purchase of that flag and pole. The pole was of the best steel from the mills, surmounted by a brass ball that shimmered and glistened in the light of the early morning sun. The flag was of silk and had cost fifteen dollars.

Fifteen dollars for free America! Peter Lapivitch chuckled to himself at the absurdity of the bargain. To him free America had given so much, and in return he had given so little; yet his heart was fairly bursting to give more. And all he could give was an abject reverence to the flag of his adopted country. That reverence he gave with his whole heart and soul.

To Peter the flag on the pole in his front yard became a fetish. Mornings he raised it; evenings he lowered it. It was a routine religiously observed. In bad weather the flag was draped over the little altar in the parlor. But always when not in use it was kept with the holy icons. That was its place, for it was one of an inseparable trinity—God, the flag, and Peter's own family.

Then in the vicissitude of life on this uncertain sphere a great war flamed up and engulfed many nations. Night after night during the weeks that followed Peter sat puffing at the pipe between his teeth and attentively listened to the readings from the newspapers by Darya, the oldest girl. Through the readings there revealed itself to Peter all the cruelty and stupidness of war.

The printed page spread before his mind's eye burning cities, battling hordes, overflowing hospitals, starving women and children. He heard of the myriads of his countrymen that swept down across Poland and into Galicia, so many dogs whipped on by masters who cared naught for human life. Europe became a shambles, a cockpit running with blood.

And ever at the conclusion of such readings Peter found it necessary to go out into the night and look up at the peaceful stars, and to cock his head to listen for the joyful note of the concertina and the singing and laughter of his neighbors in order to realize that all of that misery and bloodshed was far away. Mumbled prayers passed his bearded lips. Here was something for which to be thankful—that free America was not a part and parcel of that terrible conflict.

Remote from the scene of war though she was, war yet made its impressions on America. Nations called loudly and persistently for the materials of war. Factory and mill were speeded up to capacity. Peter went to work early and came home late. One week the pay envelope contained fifty-six dollars. Then one morning Darya and the oldest boy were set to work in the mills tending shrapnel lathes. That week the combined earnings of the household reached the total of eighty-two dollars. It was a veritable cloudburst of wealth, and in a spirit of thanksgiving Peter ordered a feast to be spread and invited his friends.

"Dat money sure come quick, Tetla," said Peter to his wife one Saturday night when more than a hundred dollars of weekly earnings were poured into her lap.

Aside from industrialism, however, the war had instituted more important and far-reaching changes in America, and those changes being purely social in nature many of them proved disastrous. These changes occurred among the polyglot peoples of the land. It was natural that the embattling nations across the sea should have their adherents in America, and these quickly resolved themselves into their respective national cliques.

There were many estrangements; friends became enemies overnight; friendships that had been years in the forming were shattered and completely destroyed. Hates became enlarged and vitalized by the news of the day as it appeared flaming across the front sheets of newspapers. It was the disintegration of the amalgamation; the boiling over of the melting-pot.

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But through it all Peter Lapivitch remained sane and serene; he went about his business with an imperturbable calm. What was war to him, was the question he asked himself over and over. True, it increased production along certain lines, and consequently increased the amounts Peter found in his pay envelope at the end of the weeks and added materially to the comforts of the home; but aside from the reflections of war, war meant practically nothing to Peter.

During those feverish days when men were rampant with this or that opinion, Peter's sole opinion was that he was an outsider, a neutral, an American. As an evidence of his neutrality and Americanism he got a small American flag and had his good wife stitch it to the front of his slouch hat.

"Dat's wot I am. Not'in' else," vowed Peter in answer to a question put to him by a coworker at the mills, and touched the little flag on his hat with reverent fingers. "I'm not Russian, not English, German, French. I'm American, dat's wot! You hear me?"

And so he was. The roaring giant transplanted from bleak Russia was indeed an American in every fiber of his huge frame. Did he not vote? He did. Did he not speak the language? Again, yes. Had he not assimilated those customs and mannerisms so peculiar to the American? Once more, he had. What could be more convincing?

"I go to dat Johnny Bright's saloon an' hear dam fallers talk," he once said to Tetla. "Dey mak me sick wit all dat foolish spatter an' guzzle. Wot I care for dam —— kings? Bah! Dat little flag she know wot I t'ink."

Again the flag on Peter's hat was honored with a tender touch.

So Peter went about the even tenor of his ways. At night came the readings from the newspapers; but now that task had been delegated to Masha, a younger girl, by virtue of Darya's position in the mills. Frequently Peter went down to Johnny Bright's saloon to drink his beer quietly and watch the melting-pot seethe and bubble. He found much talk at Johnny's.

It was talk of various degrees of intensity and meaning; some spoke this way and others spoke another way; but all talk was directed toward a certain positive end—war. From his table in a dark corner Peter listened and laughed cynically at what he heard. He laughed in particular at the vain mouthings of one "Hicky" Kelly.

HICKY KELLY was a very great man in his district of the city, and it was commonly reported that he carried a number of precincts in his vest pocket which he was prone to place at the disposal of his favorite candidates. More than one policeman on the force owed his appointment to a word from Hicky. But Hicky did not stop with the small fry; it was belived that several of the big fish were his. Hicky was also a power physically, and on occasion he would don the gloves and a pair of bathing-trunks and batter some embryo pugilist into unconsciousness and pugilistic oblivion.

Of course Hicky had his following; it could not be otherwise when certain species of mankind admire brute strength coupled with the dexterity to display that strength to the best advantage. Hicky's favorite rendezvous was Johnny Bright's saloon, and night after night Hicky stood at Johnny's bar surrounded by his satellites. With a mug of beer in his hand it was the way of Hicky to speak at length on the great world tragedy, and one and all his men-at-arms nodded their perfect concurrence in Hicky's opinions.

Hicky was a very wise man, and what he said was absolute truth and not to be disputed. It was not safe for any man to dispute Hicky, right or wrong; courage of a sort always quails before the invincible might of brute strength. But to Peter Lapivitch there seemed to be something dreadfully incongruous about Hicky Kelly, and it was at the sayings of Hicky that Peter laughed most prodigiously, though silently.

Peter's chuckles at Hicky's wisdom were as deep booming thunders in his throat. On this evening while Peter sat at his table drinking his beer Hicky was declaiming on the very essence of things; he was striking at the core; he was stripping his mind that all might see just what manner of man he really was. Just now it was the infamy of America, the cowardly.

"An' what have they done?" concluded Hicky's lengthy oration. "Not a thing, —— 'em, not a thing! America!" The scorn in Hicky's utterance of the word

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amounted to an invective, a curse. "They gab about the spirit of '76—America—to —— wid America!"

Hicky paused and spat disgustedly on the floor of Johnny Bright's saloon.

The bitter words of Hicky Kelly came to the ears of Peter Lapivitch like the crack of a whip. They were full and distinct; there was no mistaking them or their import. The chuckle in Peter's throat transformed itself into a harsh growl. Who dare defame free America within his hearing?

Slowly Peter picked his ponderous body from the chair where he sat and walked to the bar. He wished to look closely into the face of the man who traduced America. That one not native-born would in time of stress cast slurs on the land of his adoption was barely consistent; but that a native-born would deliberately. . . Peter Lapivitch shook his head at the mystery of it.

He reached the bar and shouldered his way in beside Hicky, those about Hicky stepping aside to let him pass as if sensing his right to intrude. Peter towered over Hicky as a liner towers over its attendant tug, his black eyes fixed steadily on Hicky's flushed face. For some time he continued to gace at Hicky as one might gaze at some strange animal. At length he spoke.

"Hicky, you say, to —— wit America?" inquired Peter quietly, yet his deep voice boomed and vibrated ominously.

Hicky's lips twisted sneeringly.

"What's that to you, you greasy dago?" he snarled. To Hicky all foreigners were "dagoes."

Peter smiled grimly and clutched the hand-rail of the bar with one big hand, while with a finger of the other he tapped Hicky on the breast.

"Dey say when you are born in America you good American," spoke Peter with deliberation. "You are born in America, ain't you, Hicky? An' you say to —— wit America. Why you say dat, Hicky?"

Peter did not speak as one requesting; he spoke as one commanding and the inflections of his deep voice were not lost on Hicky. Hicky sensed rather than heard the mutterings of his companions; he knew instinctively that every eye was upon him. Surely they all saw the flush of shame that crept to his neck and face.

From the corner of his eye Hicky saw Johnny Bright pause in his labors behind the bar to fix him with questioning eyes. To his very face, surrounded by his henchmen, in the very heart of the district where he was supreme, Hicky had been shamed by a foreigner. A greasy dago had flouted him to his face; had questioned his wisdom; had grossly insulted him.

The prestige that was his by the might of his two fists and the votes he carried in his pocket was trembling in the balance and Hicky knew it. He realized that his crown of kingship was tottering and perhaps he would fall into an ignoble niche and remain there forever after. What should he do to recover himself? It must be a bold stroke or nothing. In single combat Peter would wipe him out; therefore bluff was the thing. Foreigners were cowardly creatures as Hicky knew them.

Searching for the way to assault Hicky's eyes fell on the little flag sewed to the front of Peter's hat. That was the thing; by its very conspicuousness Hicky guessed that it meant much to Peter. It was a good guess; the flag meant all to Peter. It was Peter Lapivitch's god next to God. Moreover, the flag seemed to mock Hicky in his extremity, and Hicky was not one to be mocked with impunity.

Suddenly he reached up and caught a corner of the flag between thumb and forefinger and ripped it clean away, then threw it upon the floor in high disdain and spit upon it and trampled it in the dirt on the floor with his feet. After that he looked up at Peter with a leering smile on his face.

A murmur of applause came from the faithful henchmen; Hicky had redeemed himself. A hand smote him on the back approvingly. They turned again to the bar crowding Peter out as if he were a mere whipped dog, and surged around Hicky and entreated him to drink.

Peter's eyes were elsewhere; they were on the little flag lying soiled and torn on the floor of Johnny Bright's saloon. Peter picked the flag up and carefully dusted it, then placed it within the bosom of his shirt. Quietly, with an absorbed air, he removed his hat and coat and placed them on a table. His lips set tightly together he again strode to the bar where Hicky stood, his step determined, and brushed through Hicky's friends as though they were so many pests with whom he would not reckon. He seized Hicky by the shoulder and swung him roughly around. Then his heavy fist

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smashed straight and true against the point of Hicky's nose.

THE glass of beer Hicky was lifting to his lips fell from his hand and smashed on the floor. A moment Hicky's body stood swaying, his nose spouting blood, then it sank to the floor in a limp heap. For a short interval no one spoke, no one moved. The suddenness of the attack came like a flash of lightning from a clear sky. Hicky and his friends had dismissed Peter as one of no consequence; his projection into their cognizance again was startling.

Then bedlam broke loose. One of Hicky's faithfuls jerked out a gun and fired pointblank into Peter's face. The bullet whipped across Peter's temple and left a trail of blood. Then from all sides they fell on him. They were for all the world like a pack of starved wolves intent on bringing him to earth. Fingers were twisted into his long hair and beard and his head was jerked and rocked unmercifully. They struck him squarely and fiercely in the face with their fists and left rents and slashes in the flesh. One slash more jagged than the others bespoke the power of brass knuckles. They sought a hold on his throat to strangle him.

But no sound above a labored breathing came from Peter; he wisely reserved his breath for the fight. Occasionally, when the press of cursing men about him became too thick, he exerted his immense strength to shake them off like so many troublesome flies, but such lulls were only momentary; back they surged to renew their holds in his hair and beard and to hammer his unprotected face with their sledge-hammer blows.

Shortly Peter was all but naked and the blood streamed down his body a veritable torrent. The floor became slippery and he had difficulty in keeping his footing. By this time Hicky had come to and was sitting up and looking about him dizzily. With a curse he leaped to his feet and flung himself into the fray. Around and around the room they swirled and swayed, and at last went crashing against a table and fell to the floor a mass of wildly flailing arms and legs, Peter undermost.

"Hit 'im wid a chair! Knife 'im!" bellowed a voice between oaths.

One of the combatants detached himself from the heap and grabbed up a chair. For several moments the man danced about the heap on the floor seeking an opening for his murderous weapon; a black head presented itself and he swung the chair downward at the head with all his force. Providentially a leg of the chair struck the floor and the blow was deflected, but it was yet sufficient to add another terrible gash to Peter's head.

Swearing, the man dropped the chair and flung himself back into the mêlée. Somehow or other Peter managed to double his long legs over his body, and putting his enormous strength behind the movement he straightened out. One man catapulted from the heap and smashed against the bar. The others, scattered like tenpins, returned to the attack and fell to stamping Peter with their heavy shoes and harrowed his face horribly with the nails in the soles of them.

Still no sound came from Peter; he gasped and sucked for his breath and that was all. The pain from a dozen or more wounds was maddening. At times his lungs refused to take the air and white streaks flashed before his eyes, but yet he would not cry for mercy. Never before had Peter Lapivitch's body undergone such a terrible mauling, and never before had Peter been called upon to resist the temptation to cry aloud in his agony. He was indeed in hard lines and nothing short of a miracle could save him from those human wolves who were determined to tramp the life from his bleeding body.

And the miracle came to pass when Peter could scarcely raise a hand to strike or a foot to kick.

"The bulls!" cried a raucous voice.

Instantly the lights went out and Peter felt a relaxing of the punishment on his body. There was a running of feet across the room and a scuffling at doors and windows. Oaths and cries of rage and pain came from all sides. Intent on escaping the hand of the law Peter staggered to his feet and ran drunkenly toward a rear door. He collided with a bulky body and, sensing a new enemy in the dark, lifted his hands weakly to the bulky body for a throat-hold. His attack was met with a sharp rap on the head from a club.

"None av that, me beauty!" warned a voice, and Peter let his hands fall limply to his sides.

"Fer the love of God, some one strike a light!" invited another voice from the darkness.

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There came a click and a sudden burst of light flooded the place. The room was a scene of the wildest disorder, a wreck. Peter seized the opportunity to look into the face of his captor and found him to be a policeman as he had suspected.

"Hey, Joe, back up the cart," called another policeman with three chevrons on the sleeve of his tunic to some one in the street.

He strode over to the bar and rapped on it with his club.

"What did I tell you about this rough-house stuff, Bright?" he demanded of Johnny, who stood trembling behind his bar. "Didn't I tell you next time I caught any fighting here I'd pinch the joint and—oh, hello, there, Kelly," he broke off, his gaze falling on Hicky for the first time.

Sergeant Tim Murphy owed his chevrons to Hicky's influence, therefore there was bound to be a deference in Hicky's favor. The sergeant kindly offered a solicitous remark concerning the battered, bleeding condition of his friend's face. Hicky ignored both the greeting and the remark and impaled Peter with a shaking finger.

"Tim, take that dirty dago in an' leave the boys be!" snarled Hicky. "Make it assault with intent to kill; I'll be around in the mornin' an' tell the old man all about it. Hurry—get 'im out of my sight before I murder 'im!"

Sergeant Murphy suppressed a good-natured smile.

"Sure, Kelly, glad to do it; some of these foreigners get mighty smart with us Americans, eh?" he said patronizingly. "All right, load him in and let's go," he ordered, addressing himself to the man who held Peter by the collar.

Peter was permitted to recover his hat and coat and put them on, then he felt himself being jerked roughly along toward the door. As he went his half-closed eyes caught the gleam of color on the floor, and with a gasp of pain he swooped with his long arm and picked the object up. It proved to be the little flag Hicky had snatched from his hat, and Peter quickly stowed it away in his pocket and went on. Presently he stumbled out into the cool night air and was all but thrown into the waiting patrol.

For the remainder of the night Peter sat on his bunk in a cell of the district jail and suffered the pain of his many wounds in silence. He had been denied the privilege of a doctor to bind up his hurts, and was even denied the right and the necessary articles to bind them up himself; his pleading request to communicate with his wife was ignored. And all this because he had smashed Hicky Kelly's face when Hicky defamed his native land and desecrated his flag.

To Peter, such treatment smacked hugely of the brutality and ruthlessness of the Russia he had left behind, and there welled up in his heart and head a burning hatred for such as Hicky Kelly and his henchmen. Had his physical wounds suffered him to sleep Peter would have remained awake because of his mental wounds. As the long hours of the night dragged by his resentment at his own inhuman treatment and rage and hatred for Hicky Kelly grew and grew until his faith in mankind tottered.

It was not so much hatred for Hicky as an individual as for the Hicky Kelly sort of Americanism that obsessed Peter. He could not for the life of him comprehend how those who had received so many gifts from a generous country could literally, like a snake, bite the hand from which those benefits had come.

Yet Hicky Kelly had done that very thing, had in fact spit in the very face of free America when he violated the symbol of Americanism; and in this he had been aided and abetted by others of his ilk, several of those others representing the boasted institutions of free America. The more Peter puzzled over this the farther away seemed the answer to it. His one comfort during that intolerable night was the colored rag he brought from his pocket, the little flag he had risked his life to defend and later had rescued from the dirty floor of Johnny Bright's saloon.

The intense darkness of the cell wherein Peter sat prevented his seeing the flag with his eyes, but he got an equal satisfaction from caressing it with his fingers. His sense of touch proclaimed to him how tattered and torn it was, and as he tenderly fingered each rent made by the vandal's foot he himself was torn with pains and a corresponding rage took hold of him.

Had Peter been the crying sort he would have expressed his emotions by tears; instead, his throat contracted and he raged inwardly like a ferocious tiger. He craved to lay his strong hands upon Hicky Kelly's throat and forever shut off the dastardly in-

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sults and contumely Hicky dared to utter against the thing of all things in the world he should have held most dear.

So Peter sat all through the night in his dark cell, sleepless, wounded in mind and body, venting his wrath upon Hicky Kelly and his breed by deep rumbling imprecations, getting a measure of peace and comfort at intervals by raising the little flag to his swollen lips and kissing it devoutly. The morning sun came and threw a dim reflected glow along the jail corridor to discover Peter still sitting silent and motionless on his bunk, the soiled and torn flag spread across his knee.

"PETER LAPIVITCH," called Judge Gordon when Peter was arraigned in police court that morning.

Peter lifted his tired, aching body from the bench where the numerous prisoners sat and was shoved into the prisoners' dock by an officious bailiff. He faced the judge with a sneer concealed within his blood-matted beard. Peter was anything but prepossessing in appearance, and the judge and a scattering of court parasites eyed him speculatively.

"Lapivitch, you are charged with assault with intent to kill," said the judge at length, scanning the transcript before him. "I see the charge is preferred by Sergeant Murphy. Sergeant, are you prepared to sustain the charge as it stands?"

"I am, your Honor," answered Murphy, stepping forward and exchanging a quick, wise look with Hicky Kelly, who had dropped in to see that justice did not miscarry. "I arrested the defendant for creating a disturbance in Bright's saloon, your Honor, and for offering an unwarranted attack on one Mr. Kelly, who stood at the bar peaceably drinking with his friends. Prisoner also resisted arrest, your Honor," lied the sergeant, with a view to impressing Hicky, then added suggestively—"Mr. Kelly is present in court if you wish his evidence."

"Assault on Mr. Kelly, eh?" said the judge, fixing Peter with a stern eye.

Judge Gordon was himself under great obligations to Hicky, thus he too showed a marked deference when it came to dealing with cases in which Hicky had an interest. But as the judge was an old man with only one arm, the other having been lost in the battle of Gettysburg, perhaps his deference was excusable if viewed from certain premises. He turned to Hicky, who was almost laughably plastered and bandaged.

"Mr. Kelly, have you anything to say?" inquired the judge urbanely.

"Murphy put it right, Judge," said Hicky, waiving the conventional salutation for the more familiar one. "It's as he says; me an' me friends is standin' at Johnny's bar 'tendin' to our own business when this dago butts in an' smashes me. No real man can stand still while a greasy dago messes up his face, so I comes back at 'im. You can't blame a man for that, Judge."

"Naturally, any man will attempt to defend himself against attacks, Mr. Kelly," replied the judge indulgently. "That will do for the present, Mr. Kelly. You, Lapivitch, have you got anything to say in your defense before this court gives judgment?"

Peter looked down into the leering faces of Kelly and the sergeant. An unuttered snarl broke in his throat and he fought down an impulse to leap from the dock and destroy them where they stood. During the long hours of the night Peter had had sufficient time in which to conclude that there was little he might say in his defense that the court could or would understand.

To Peter, ill-versed in the law and ways of the court, the law for which Sergeant Murphy stood would doubtless be a partial, unfair thing, and there would be no disposition of the court to grant Peter, a foreigner by birth, even a small chance when arrayed against the native-born and a politician with votes to barter.

He had determined to say nothing, to docilely and silently accept any fate the court awarded him. Yet, when he now looked down into the mocking faces of his enemies, all the combativeness of Peter surged up within him like the rush of an angry surf. The spirit that caused the great love for the little flag in his pocket also inspired him with an overwhelming desire to defend that flag.

His god next to God had been defiled, and that act awoke within Peter's breast a savage resentment similar to that of a lioness whose cubs had been mistreated. Futile though he thought it to be, yet he would have his say. He shifted his gaze from the leering faces below him to the serious, questioning face of the judge.

"Well?" said the judge with professional

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firmness, though a mild compassion for the battered Peter softened his words. "Have you anything to say, Lapivitch?"

"I t'ink I got somet'ing to say, Mister; I got——"

"Address the court as 'your Honor,' Lapivitch!" barked the clerk in Peter's ear.

Peter bestowed upon that individual a glance of scorn, but he heeded the command nevertheless.

"Sure, I got somet'ing to say, your Honor," Peter went on, collecting himself and feeling for his words with care. "Dat faller Hicky say I am a dago. Italians called dat, an' I am not Italian. One time I am Russian, but dat is long time ago; now I am American. When I come to dis country I forget about dat Russia quick an' mak myself American. I vote an' my kids go to school an' Tetla she——"

"Confine your remarks to the case in hand, Lapivitch," interrupted the judge testily. "Your family affairs have nothing to do with this. Explain why you assaulted Mr. Kelly."

Peter was nonplussed for the moment and was on the point of taking his seat without another word, but the spirit within him encouraged him to proceed.

"Well, I tell you about dat," he continued, ill at ease. "I go to dat Johnny Bright's saloon las' night an' I am drinkin' my beer an' listenin' to de talk of dat Hicky Kelly an' his friends at de bar. I hear Hicky say, 'To —— wit America.' I don't lak to hear peoples say dat about my country, 'cause dis country she do so much for me. So I ask Kelly wot he mean when he say dat. He say dat none of my business, but dat is some of my business.

"When dat war she commence Tetla she fix dat little flag to my hat. Dat show ever'body I am American. So Kelly he pull dat little flag from my hat an' throw it on de floor an' step on it. Dat sure mak me mad, so I smash his face. Dat's how I come to hit Kelly, an' I am sorry I don't kill dat Kelly for dat insult to my little flag."

"You say you are sorry that you didn't kill Kelly when you struck him for insulting your flag? Is that what you mean, Lapivitch?" inquired the judge in a peculiar voice when Peter had finished speaking.

"Sure; I say I lak to kill Kelly for dat," replied Peter venomously, sending a malevolent glance at Hicky.

FOR some moments after that the judge silently studied the wall at the back of the court-room, stroking his chin reflectively. A curious gleam began to form in his gray eyes, and the expression that grew on his face was one of mingled anger and surprise. Finally he turned a cold, forbidding pair of eyes on Hicky. For an interval he looked at Hicky attentively, then said:

"Kelly, you have heard what Lapivitch said. Is it true?"

A note of pain dominated the judge's voice and his words came jerkily. Hicky was quick to note that a sudden change had come over his friend on the bench and shifted his feet nervously. He tried to evade the accusing eyes of the judge but without success.

"Aw, it wasn't much, Judge," said Hicky at length. "I just pulled a little rag off of the dago's hat, that's all."

"Uh-huh," said the judge, and again regarded Hicky attentively. "Lapivitch, what became of the rag to which Kelly refers?"

The changed manner of the judge had its effect on Peter no less than on Kelly; he sensed that what he had at first believed was to be a subverted justice was shaping itself into a real justice; it seemed as though in the judge he had found a sponsor for his assault on Kelly. But Peter could not fathom just what had brought about that change and wondered at it. When he took the little flag from his pocket and passed it to the clerk, who in turn passed it up to the judge, a faint smile crossed Peter's lips.

Peter kept his eyes steadily fastened on the judge's face as that gentleman tenderly smoothed out the flag and studied it. Peter noted that when the gentleman on the bench fingered the many holes in the flag he pressed his lip with his teeth and narrowed his eyes. And Peter noticed also that when the judge lifted his gaze to Kelly, as he frequently did, his eyes gleamed with the light of battle.

"So this is the rag, is it, Kelly?" said the judge at last, witheringly.

Kelly said nothing; there was nothing to say. For the man who wilfully and maliciously desecrates his country's flag there is no defense. A Benedict Arnold could have no less ground to stand on. As Peter watched the flush of shame that swept over Hicky's neck and face, extending

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even to the tips of his ears, he chuckled to himself. Whatever of doubt of the justice of the law of free America Peter might have entertained because of previous treatment at the hands of its emissaries, it was removed when he heard the judge say, addressing himself to both Kelly and Sergeant Murphy:

"In the opinion of this court," said the judge, "the man who violates his flag is a greater criminal than he who steals or murders. For that reason, Sergeant, this court will issue a warrant for this man Kelly's arrest for a misdemeanor. In the meantime please remove him from this court-room."

That was all the judge said, but it was sufficient to throw fear and consternation into Hicky Kelly's heart. For a moment it seemed that Hicky would say something in defense of his defenseless position, for his lips stood half-open; but the expression on the judge's face forbade protest, and in the end Hicky was marched ignobly from the court-room in the custody of his friend and servant. As the door closed behind them a triumphant smile crept to Peter's battered, blood-smeared face.

Peter now understood that, while the spirit of Americanism was dead in some hearts, it still breathed and was a living thing in the heart of at least one of those in the higher places to whom Americanism looks for its vindication and maintenance. The rebuke to Hicky Kelly, who, in Peter's mind, typified the proselytes of Americanism, proclaimed that the ideals to which Peter had bowed down were substantial and well founded; that Americanism and the flag of America were not to be trampled in the dust by any man or set of men.

No better proof of the righteousness of his course could have been offered to Peter Lapivitch at that time when he stood on the verge of repudiating and discounting the true worth of his god next to God, and he came from his doubting state more completely possessed of and enamored of free America and her institutions.

"Lapivitch," said the judge kindly when the door had closed behind the sergeant and his prisoner, "I, too, fought for that flag."

Peter looked at the judge with a new interest.

"You don't fight no Hicky Kelly," he half-inquired.

The judge shook his head.

"No; I fought to preserve the flag from men who, while inspired from high and noble principles from their points of view, yet strove to destroy this flag and those things for which this flag stood—unity of Americanism and an undivided people."

"I know about dat; Darya, she tell me about dat Civil War," said Peter with an understanding nod of his head.

That, then, was the explanation for the judge's change of front. He, like Peter, had been obsessed with the same lofty spirit of love and devotion for the flag that represented free America, and like Peter he had fought for that flag. The explanation entirely satisfied Peter. A few moments later he made his way down from the prisoner's dock a free man, and with the little flag tucked away in his pocket walked down the aisle of the court-room to the door. At the door he stopped with his hand on the knob.

He looked back at the judge. Their eyes met. There was no smile, no change of expression on the face of that rigid figure on the bench; yet Peter beheld in those keen eyes that looked into his own across the court-room a light similar to that which he had so often seen in the eyes of the General Washington on the wall of his home. With a bow to the judge Peter opened the door and went out.

"Say, dat faller he know wot," said Peter as he started for home. "He lak me—American. But I bet dat Hicky Kelly mak dat old judge lose his job nex' election time. If de time come when somebody step on you, little flag, we fight again, me an' dat judge; we fight all de Hicky Kelly's in de world for you. Sure! You hear me?"

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Monkeying *with* Ancestors

by W·C·TUTTLE

Author of "Salt of the Earth," "Clean Crazy," etc.

ME AND "Chuck" Warner sets there on uh truck on the depot platform at Paradise, and wishes we had enough money left to buy uh ticket on the train what has just announced its approach to our city.

"I'm sick uh Paradise and the Cross-J outfit," declares Chuck. "There ain't never nothing going on, and uh feller just simply dies uh dry rot. Yuh can't even get into uh honest poker game no more."

"You trusts your friends too much," I replies. "If you'd uh done what I wanted yuh to last night we'd uh had uh chance. Never play poker with your friends. Old man Whittaker is just as crooked as 'Muley' Bowles and 'Telescope' Tolliver.

"I holds out four eights to play against Telescope or Muley, and when I gets tired uh holding 'em I slips 'em to the old man, and gives him the sign to play 'em against Muley or Telescope. Just to illustrate how dishonest uh man can be, he plays 'em against my little full-house. Never again do I play honest poker."

The train drifts in and the baggage-car stops just a few feet from us. It's near dark, and we're alone on the platform. The door slides open and out comes uh human whirlwind. He hits on the platform, skids along on his hands and knees, and comes up wailing:

"Me feex uh you! You kick uh me, eh? You kick uh Ajax! Cur-r-rse uh you!"

"Here comes your danged monkey!" yells uh voice inside the car, and out comes uh monkey as big as uh small man, and the peeved party and the monkey goes into uh clinch, and rolls over and over.

The man breaks the clinch, hops for the handle of the door, and spits like uh bob-cat:

"Me feex uh you! You pay for dees! You t'row me off! Me—Pedr-r-ro Adonis Fer-r-r-retti! You t'row off uh Ajax, and call uh heem uh moonk! I sue uh you—you——"

"*Ahr-r-r-r!*" snorts the feller in the car, and out he comes.

I don't reckon that Pedro is much on the fight, 'cause the minute this here party from the car hits the platform Pedro drifts around the corner like uh scared wolf. He sails off into the mesquite, and the baggage-man comes back. He grins at us, takes uh kick at the animile, and hops aboard, when the brakey signals the engineer to drift.

There ain't nobody on the platform but me and Chuck and the monk, and the three of us looks each other over. Chuck rolls uh cigaret, and clears his throat.

"Hen," says he, "there sets our ancestor."

"Grandpaw Warner, I greets yuh," says I. "I'd admire to know just what kind of uh monkey you are."

"Moonk!" snorts uh voice behind us, and there stands Pedro. He's some scratched up from mesquite prongs. "Ajax uh he no moonk," he informs us. "Ajax he's uh ape.

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Wonder-r-r-rful trained uh ape. Act uh like uh man, look uh like uh man. Wort' uh hundred t'ousand dollars."

"Mex?" asks Chuck, but Pedro shakes his head. "Naw-w-w! Italia."

"What did yuh get off here for?" I asks.

"For?" Pedro ties his face in uh knot, shakes his fist up the track, and speaks to us in uh language that must be wonderful to cuss in.

He keeps getting more intelligible all the time, and after uh while he gets down to denatured United States:

"Me feex uh heem plenty. We play in t'eater—me and Ajax. I travel wit' Ajax in baggage-car. Baggage-man he get uh fresh wit' Ajax and Ajax bite uh heem. *Bam!* He smash uh Ajax wit' uh valise. I get uh sore and hit uh heem wit' both uh feests. *Bam!* He knock uh me steef! Whan we come uh here he t'row us off. Me feex uh heem! Me sue uh de railroad for uh meelion dollar! Me—Pedr-ro Adonis Fer-r-retti!"

"Pedro, I wish yuh many happy birthdays," states Chuck. "Any time I hears uh man speak of uh million dollars I either want to kiss him or kill him. Uh million is uh lot uh money to speak of, ain't it, Hen?"

"After it gets over uh dollar and eighty cents she all looks and sounds alike to me. Pedro, would yuh like uh little drink?"

I hauls out uh quart, and offers it to him.

He depletes it to the bottom of the label, and uh minute later I has to pull uh gun to keep him from kissing me. Chuck gives him uh shot out uh his bottle, and he worships us back seven generations. Chuck puts his bottle beside him on the truck, and we sings for the little feller.

"Let's all have another—my——!" exclaims Chuck. "That ain't no monkey—he's uh man."

He had reached for his bottle, but it was gone, and out on the handle uh that truck sets Ajax with the bottle to his lips.

"Drop uh dat, Ajax!" yelps the Italian, and makes uh grab for the bottle.

He was uh little too energetic in his reach, and catches his toe under that handle. Ajax dropped the bottle all right, all right. But he dropped it right on Pedro's top-knot—

Ker-bam!

"Well, well!" grins Chuck. "I've knowed hooch to make uh monkey out of uh man but that's the first reversal I ever seen. Here, Ajax, you son-of-uh-gun, quit hitting him! Can't yuh see he don't feel it?"

"*Chee-e-e-e-e, chr-r-r-r-rl*" says Ajax.

He reaches out one hairy paw, and pinches his boss on the seat of the pants. No response. Then he waddles over, grabs the top uh that truck and swings up beside us, where he makes faces at us and rubs his stummick.

"Have uh little smoke?" asks Chuck, and hands his cigaret to the animile.

Ajax takes the cigaret, smells of the lighted end and then puts the other end in his mouth.

"Ajax, I greets yuh as uh brother," says Chuck, and him and that ape shakes hands like two old friends.

After he shakes with Chuck, Ajax reaches past and shakes hands with me.

Ajax then reaches over and puts his hand on the butt of Chuck's six-shooter.

"Hairy son-of-uh-rooster!" exclaims Chuck. "Wonder if he knows what uh gun is for?"

He drops the shells out in his hand and offers the Colt to Ajax. The ape smells of the muzzle, spins the cylinder, and finally takes it in his hand just like uh man, and snaps it twice.

"Enough," says I. "All you needs is bad associations to make uh cowpuncher out uh you, Ajax. You might lend him your chaps, Chuck. He's got legs about as long as yours."

"Wonder how he'd look?" laughs Chuck, and pulls off his chaps.

We has quite uh time cinching 'em up so that they fits him, but we finally made the lower half uh that animile look uh heap like Chuck Warner. We has another drink and slips uh goodly portion to the ancestor, who seems to enjoy the sensation.

"I'm going to put my shirt on him, too," announces Chuck, and proceeds to make good.

You'd be surprised to see how human that animile looks.

"Here, be uh regular feller," says I, and hands him my six-gun.

"My ——!" yelps Chuck. "It's loaded! You danged fool!"

Bing! Uh bullet hits the hind wheel uh the truck and hums off down the track.

"*Chee-e-e-e! Wakie, wakie, wakie!*" announces Ajax.

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ME AND Chuck has seen and heard enough. The placid Summer atmosphere gets two holes torn in itself when me and Chuck sails off that platform, and breezes for town.

We don't stop until we're down back uh Mike Pelly's saloon, where we sets down to catch our fleeting breath. Uh course Chuck has to chide me for giving Ajax that gun, and I replies that there's one satisfaction; as soon as he shoots five more times the gun will be empty.

"That's uh cheerful way uh looking at it," agrees Chuck. "Let's go around in front and see what's doing."

We pilgrims around in front. It's getting dark, but the lights shine out from Mike's palace uh sin. We looks in the window and sees "Doughgod" Smith, "Mighty" Jones, "Harelip" Hansen, "Tellurium" Woods and Mike Pelly playing poker.

That sure is uh combination that honest men ought to shun. I'd make uh little bet that there ain't more than thirty-five cards to the deal when them hombres play together. They sure do covet extra chances.

"Want to set in?" I asks, but Chuck shakes his head and shivers.

"Not me, Hennery. Them burglars would win my undershirt and drawers. They're likely all half-shot, and yuh can't hardly beat that combination when they're sober. I wish I had my—look-out, Hen! Here comes that million-dollar monk!"

I takes one look and sees Ajax. He's got Chuck's hat on one side of his head, and is dragging that gun behind him. We just lingers long enough to see him and then we fades around the corner. Ajax sizes up the place, tries to straighten up his hat, and then pilgrims right inside.

We slips right back and peeks in the window. Them poker players are too busy watching each other to notice the monk, who has taken uh ringside seat, with that gun across his lap like the lookout in uh stud game. He sure is an apparition, with that floppy Steston on one side of his head and them long, hairy hands fondling that big six-gun.

Pretty soon Harelip Hansen reaches for the discards, and happens to glimpse Ajax. He stares for uh few seconds, shifts his eyes away and looks again. He nods, sort uh sad-like, and begins to shuffle the cards. Every little while he glances at Ajax, but pretty soon he seems to get uh hold on his nerves, and ignores the animile.

Doughgod drops uh card on the floor, and when he reaches for it he gets uh look at Ajax, who makes uh face at him. Him and the monk stares at each other for uh spell, and then Ajax scratches himself on the nose and tilts his hat to the other side.

Doughgod slips the card into his pocket, and passes the pot. After uh little he turns and looks at the ape, and then turns away like he was suffering uh heap inside.

"Might as well have another little drink," announces Mike, sliding back his chair.

"Make mine sody water," states Doughgod, and Harelip speaks right up—

"Mine, too, Mike."

"Sody!" snorts Mike. "Drink sody water—you two?"

"Uh-huh," nods Doughgod. "Too much whisky is bad for uh man's nerves. I been going to taper off for uh long time, Mike."

"Well," laughs Mike, "If you wants sody I reckon yuh——"

Mike had stepped behind the bar and reached for the bottle, when he sees Ajax. He leans against the bar, and scratches his head with the neck of the bottle, while Ajax grins at him and tilts that hat to the other side.

Mike glances away, and then looks again. It's still there. He sighs deep-like and hauls out three tall glasses, fills 'em with soda and then fills two glasses uh hooch.

Just then Chuck sniggers, and Mighty Jones turns his head. Mighty's hair raises his hat about an inch when he looks into Ajax's face. He stares at the monk for uh second, and then turns to look at the others. He glances back at Ajax and then at the tray that Mike has brought.

"Mike, bre-bre-bring me some sody, too," he stutters. "Uh-uh-feller can't drink whisky always and not have it react on him."

Mike throws that glass of whisky on the floor and fills Mighty's order. They spills uh heap uh liquor over the cards when they takes the glasses off the tray. Tellurium Woods is the only one to take whisky, and he grins at the other glasses.

"Here's to uh man-sized drink," he toasts. "Here's to men who——"

A hairy paw slips across his shoulder and reaches for the glass, and Tellurium freezes plumb stiff. The rest of them gasps when they sees it, and then looks away. Doughgod

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yawns, reaches for the cards and begins to deal uh new hand.

Tellurium turns his head, slow-like, and looks Ajax square in the face. He stares at the monk for uh full ten seconds, and then hands him the glass. Ajax accepts it like uh gentleman, drinks the liquor, sets the glass on the table and goes back to his own chair. Tellurium looks at the empty glass, looks at the monk, and then back at the others. They ain't paying the least bit of attention.

"Mike!" whispers Tellurium, hoarse-like. "You got any more sody?"

Doughgod is leaning back in his chair, fingering his glass, and looking at Ajax. Sudden-like he announces—

"I may be as loco as uh louse, but, by the horns on the moon I'm going to find out."

He throws that tall glass straight at Ajax's head.

That animile sure was trained. He just reaches up like uh baseball player and takes that glass in one hand. He smells of it, turns up his nose, and sets it beside him on the chair.

"I am!" groans Doughgod. "I absolutely, certainly am!"

"Am what?" whispers Mike. "Do you see it, Doughgod! Do yuh? Speak!"

"Do you, Mike?" whoops Mighty. "Do both of yuh see what I see?"

"Chee-e-e-e-e! Wakie, wakie, wakie!"

Bang!

Me and Chuck drops flat and lets about forty dollars' worth uh chips sail through the window over our heads. Ajax had accidently fired that gun into Mike's case uh chips, and she plows through uh ten-dollar jack-pot, and out through the window.

"He held openers!" gasps Chuck, and out comes them merry gamblers in uh group. We sees Tellurium's bald head glisten in the light, as he grabs off his hat and gallops off up the street, with Harelip Hansen right behind him, whistling like uh wind-broken bronc. Mike, Doughgod and Mighty went the other way.

We peeks through the busted window, and there sets Ajax on the bar. He's got two guns beside him, and is examining uh bottle uh soda water. It's one uh them patent bottles that yuh got to hit against something to drive the stopper inside, and Ajax sure is stumped. He peeks through the bottle like it was uh telescope, and pretty soon he gets sore. He picks up uh gun and begins to pound that bottle all around.

Bung! The bottle busted right in his face, and what that ancestor of ours done to that saloon was uh crime. We hears the glassware hit the floor, bottles spewed all over everything, and pretty soon Ajax struts out of the door, drunk as uh fool, but still hanging on to them two guns.

"Drunk as —— and loaded for bear!" exclaims Chuck. "Reckon I better kill him."

"Kill Ajax?" I gasps. "Kill the only living, breathing, gun-toting bunch uh delirium tremens that ever infested Paradise? Kill uh million-dollar animile, Chuck? Think how long it would take, on your salary, to pay for it."

CHUCK nods, and puts his gun back, and Ajax disappears in the dark.

"You stay here, Hen," says Chuck. "I got to get some clothes."

"Store is closed. Where yuh going to get some?"

"You wait: I'll get some."

He ducks around the corner, and in about fifteen minutes he's back. I looks him over as careful as I can, and inquires the name uh his tailor.

"Ajax's boss loaned 'em to me," he states. "He's too drunk to care so I helped myself. I left mine. How do they fit?"

They didn't. Chuck is built like uh ordinary man with his legs sawed off. The upper part of his body must uh took the growth away from his legs, 'cause from his waist on up he's the longest in captivity, but from his waist on down he ain't much to speak of. He buys ordinary length uh chaps and cuts 'em off at the knee.

Can you imagine uh form like his wearing uh thirty-six coat? Can yuh also imagine uh long, Roman-nosed face looking out from under uh little green derby hat? The cuffs uh that coat comes just to his elbows, and he looks at me, with that long lock uh hair streaming down over his forehead from under that little green hat, and has the nerve to ask me how he looks. He wiggles his ears when he asks the question.

"Chuck," says I, "you ain't far removed from your ancestor. You look like uh bull moose in uh bathing-suit. I'd opine that Pedro Adonis Feretti would look like what you do if somebody cut off his legs and fed

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him uh barrel uh yeast-cakes. They don't fit yuh, Chuck, but they partly covers your shame."

"Has the Darwin theory killed anybody yet?" he asks.

"All I've heard is one shot since you left," says I.

"When that sleeping Adonis loaned me his clothes he forgot to remove his roll," states Chuck. "Some folks is careless thataway. Let's go down to Dug's and set into the game."

We pilgrims almost to Dug's place when we hears voices raised in anger, and we recognizes Muley Bowles and Telescope Tolliver talking to old man Whittaker.

"Aw, Chuck wouldn't do uh thing like that," argues the old man.

"He did!" yelps Muley. "I tell yuh he took uh shot at me. Don't I know that hombre? No, he didn't hit me but he scared my bronc so bad that he pitched me off in the road."

"I seen him, too," states Telescope. "There ain't no argument."

"Well, what yuh going to do?" asks the old man. "Going to tell the sheriff?"

"Sheriff ——!" snorts Muley. "Not me! I'll show that mule-faced Jasper where to head in at. Danged little sawed-off imitation of uh man!"

"Maybe he's still thinking of how yuh got that extra ace last night," suggests the old man.

"Maybe," agrees Muley, sarcastic-like.

"I'd love to play one more game uh bottle pool before his funeral," states Telescope, and the three of them goes inside.

Me and Chuck sets there on the rack and smokes in silence.

"You ain't got no cause for alarm," says I, after uh while. "Muley is looking for Chuck Warner, so uh specimen like you is safe. You look about as much like yourself as——"

"More pilgrims," says Chuck, and we hears somebody hurrying up the street.

When he hits the light we sees Bill McFee, sheriff, and just as he gets in front of the saloon Muley and Weinie Lopp comes out. They greets Bill, and we hears Bill ask—

"Say, you fellers know whose gun this is?"

They appears to be looking at something and we hears Muley state:

"Sure. That's Hen Peck's gun. See that ten-cent piece in the handle?"

"It was throwed through my office window," states Bill. "It sure spoiled uh good piece uh glass. It's still got three loaded shells in it."

"What would Hen smash your window for?" asks Weinie.

"I don't think he did," states Bill. "I hopped outside just in time to see uh person duck around the corner. I opines that it's——"

"Chuck Warner," says Muley.

"How'd you know?" asks Bill, and Muley laughs. "Huh! That's nothing. He took uh shot at me this evening. Him and Hen are together, and I wouldn't trust either one of them."

"Well!" says Bill, surprised-like. "I reckon we better put uh jail around them two," and then the three of 'em goes inside.

"Hen," pronounces Chuck, "some day you'll hear about uh train being held up, and the baggageman killed, and you'll know that I'm getting even for this entertainment. Just you wait until I gets my hands on that ances—he cometh!"

Here comes Ajax. He's still got that hat cocked over his ear, and he sets there in the light and scratches his ribs with the barrel of uh six-gun.

"My —— !" whispers Chuck. "I wish that gun would go off. Here, Ajax. Hyah, boy. Come here."

Ajax hears the whispered summons and waddles over towards us. When he gets in front of us Chuck slides to the ground.

"Nice old Ajax," croons Chuck. "How yuh feel, eh? Nice old apie. That's the stuff. Let me have them clothes and that nasty gun, and we'll give yuh uh nice little drink. Hen, come on down and help me take these clothes off."

I slides down, although uh still, small voice tells me to set right up there on the rack.

"Here. Pull off the shirt," commands Chuck. I reaches down and takes Ajax by the hand. Never do uh thing like that. Never shake hands with an ape. I thought for uh second that I'd caught my fingers in uh door, and he yanks me so hard that I loses my feet, and down we goes—me on top uh Chuck and him on the monk.

We hold him for just three ticks of uh watch, and then we don't. I loses the whole back out uh my vest, and gets my shirttail pulled up around my ears. When I gets settled I finds that Ajax is gone.

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Chuck sets there on the ground and blinks in the dark, while I finds his little hat and puts it back on his head.

"Did yuh get that gun?" I asks.

He feels himself over for uh minute and then wails in uh hoarse whisper:

"Gee cripes! He's got my gun, too. What do yuh—dang his hairy hide, he got that money! Pocket and all gone."

"He'll likely kill somebody," says I.

"We won't mind," wails Chuck. "We'll either be dead or in jail, so it won't make much difference."

JUST then Mike Pelly and Doughgod comes across the street, and when they're almost to Dug's out comes Bill McFee and four or five punchers.

"Hey, Bill!" yells Mike. "We been looking for yuh. Somebody busted up my poker game and scared thunder out of all of us. Took uh shot at my chip rack and then wrecked the place."

"Who was it?" asks Bill. "Didn't yuh see them?"

"Well," says Mike. "We did and didn't. There was five of us, but no two of us saw it alike. Harelip and Tellurium left town right away."

"What yuh been drinking?" asks Bill.

"Sody water," replies Mike, short-like, Bill laughs.

"Was it Chuck Warner?" asks somebody.

"Now that yuh mentions it," orates Doughgod, slow-like, "I sort uh seem to recognize that blue shirt and—say, how long has Chuck been away from uh razor? This one needs uh shave."

"You ought to know him well enough to recognize him," states Telescope's voice. "I knowed him the minute I seen him shoot at Muley. All I got was uh flash in the dark, but yuh can't fool me. I know every line uh that hombre."

Yuh might as well argue with uh bob-cat as to disagree with Telescope Tolliver, so nobody says uh word.

"I don't want him jailed," states Muley. "No danged man can bushwhack me and get away with it."

That's the first time I ever seen Muley sore. There's too much fat on his carcass to allow him to get above normal. He's so heavy that he bends uh bronc all out uh shape, but there's one thing he can do to the queen's taste, and that is to recite poetry. It's all original, too.

"He's uh ungrateful cow thief!" states Muley, and then he recites:

"I loved him like uh brother,
And I shared with him my bed.
I gave him half of everything,
Now he tries to shoot me dead.
He'd bite the hand what fed him.
He's worser than the worst.
I'll kill that horse-faced hombre,
If he don't kill me first."

"Well," opines Weinie Lopp, "I don't know how Chuck looks at it, Muley, but I'd uh heap rather have yuh on my trail than on my conscience or on my lap."

"Poetry don't get yuh no place but in the loco lodge," observes Bill. "We got to land them two. I don't know what we can jail Hen for unless it's for being in bad company. Muley, you and Telescope will help us, won't yuh?"

"Not," states Muley. "If you got him you'd put him in jail. No man can shoot at me and——"

"The majesty of the law must be upheld," states Bill.

"You hold it then," says Muley. "Telescope, let's go and finish that game uh pool."

They goes back inside, and McFee and his noble pack goes down the street toward Bill's office.

"Chuck, I can hear my maw calling me," says I. "She always told me to keep out uh bad company. You're uh nervy cuss to throw your gun—or rather my gun—through the sheriff's window. Horse-faced hombre! Muley sure hankers for your gore, Mister Warner."

Chuck grunts and rolls uh smoke.

"I'd opine that we better go home," says I. "Maybe you hankers for hemp, but I don't. Old man Peck's little sunshine wasn't born to be party of the first part in uh lynching bee."

"Shut up!" snaps Chuck. "Here comes some more peevish persons."

They're talking some excited-like, and as they comes closer we recognizes Mike Pelly and Doughgod. They're bareheaded and seem to be mussed up uh bit. Old man Whittaker and Hank Padden meets 'em at the door, just as some of the posse rides up.

"Don't stutter, Mike," advises Hank. "Collect your thoughts, and don't let your voice jump so many hurdles."

"Collect ——!" howls Mike. "Is everybody gone loco? Is Chuck Warner uh human being? Muley!" he yelps, before anybody

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has uh chance to answer him. "Muley, was that Chuck what took uh shot at you, and was he wearing uh blue shirt? Has his sombrero got uh snake-skin band on it?"

"You described him, Mike," agrees Muley. "What's he done now?"

Mike holds something up to the light, and they all looks at it.

"That's his hat-band," states Telescope. "I helped him skin that snake. Fifteen rattles and uh button. That's his."

"You seen it, too, didn't yuh, Doughgod?" asks Mike, like he wasn't sure of his own eyesight.

Doughgod replies that he certainly did see all of it.

"What did he do?" howls Bill. "What yuh trying to do—keep uh secret from the law?"

"Dang you and your law!" yelps Mike. "Listen: when me and Doughgod goes back to my place, we finds Mighty Jones and he goes with us. The three of us enters my place, and there on the pool-table sets—what set on the table, Doughgod?"

"You're speaking fluently, Mike," stated Doughgod. "Go on."

"Well," continues Mike," he was setting there on that table. It ain't very light in there, but we sees him tip up uh bottle and take uh shot. Now you ain't going to believe this, but it's true as Gospel: he sets himself and jumps plumb from the table over to the top of the bar! Twelve feet if it's uh inch!"

"Twelve feet ain't uh world's record," says Weinie Lopp. "Once I jumped——"

" 'Get him!' says I to Doughgod," continues Mike, "and we makes uh rush at him."

"But we didn't get him," finishes Doughgod. "He jumps right up on top uh Mike's mirror, sails from there over to Mike's swinging-lamp, like uh circus acrobat. He just swings once, and down comes that lamp right on my head. He lands on uh table, and slips outdoors."

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" roars Mike. "Doughgod went outdoors with us, and he's got the handle uh that lamp still around his neck."

"Then what?" asks Bill.

"Then, we're desperate," states Mike. "We jumps right into him. I lost my suspenders, and all I got was that hat-band. He went right up the corner uh that building like it was uh ladder. When he gets to the top he tears loose that heavy beer sign and drops it right into our midst. I don't know where he went from there."

"Did Mighty Jones see this?" asks Hank Padden. "I'd admire to hear Mighty tell us about it. He's honest. Where is he, Mike?"

"He's under that beer sign."

Uh course it struck me and Chuck so funny that we both has to snicker right out loud, and right then we becomes the center of interest—or yuh might say the apex. There didn't seem to be many places to go, but we sure went where there was to go. With that posse right on our trail we sure did cover territory. We ducked around that town like uh pair uh scared rabbits until we ain't got enough wind left to fill uh toy balloon. Pretty soon we ducks behind some boxes back uh Dug's place, and lets the posse drift past.

"I-I-I got uh-uh-uh-scheme," pants Chuck. "Huh-huh-here's uh ladder. We'll get on the roof."

I saves my breath for climbing, so don't reply. The ladder barely reaches the eaves, when it's almost perpendicular, but that don't alarm us. We climb that ladder close together until we gets to the top. I'm in the rear, and when Chuck stops I has to.

"Go on up!" I whispers, when he starts to climb down into me, but he turns his head and hisses down at me:

"Look out! Ajax!"

And just then something grabs the top uh that ladder, gives it uh heave, and over we goes.

WHEN I gets my strength back I hear the posse coming back, so we gets up and starts out again.

"Hen," he states, "we'd make better time if we left the ladder. No use in trying to make uh getaway yoked up like oxen."

We sheds the ladder and sneaks around to the hitch-rack. We're going to get our broncs and go home, but there ain't uh bronc left at the rack, and we hears Muley state—

"They won't go far without their horses, that's uh cinch, so we'll just keep 'em under cover until we lands them miscreants."

"What yuh got in your hand?" I asks Chuck. "You ain't going to hit anybody with uh rock are yuh?"

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"That's my hat. Somebody must uh kicked the brim all off, 'cause she sure looks like half an egg right now, Hen. I hope they don't lay me out in these clothes."

"What's to be done now?" I inquires.

"I got uh good idea, Hen. We'll go back to the depot, and I'll take my clothes—what there is of 'em—off that drunk Italian. Then I'll put 'em on, go boldly into the saloon, and tell 'em that I been kidnaped by uh wild man what stole my shirt, hat and chaps. Ain't that uh good scheme?"

"Come on," says I. "Good or bad it ain't no worse than the fix we're in now."

But the Italian ain't there. All we finds is uh empty bottle and plenty uh silence. We sets down on the truck and rolls cigarets.

"You still got your boots," says I, after uh while. "Suppose yuh takes off the rest of the clothes, and goes in thataway. It makes the play just the same."

"I'll take off my rainbow raiment, Hen, but I'll be hanged if I take off my underclothes. Here, hold these glad garments, Hen."

He proceeds to take 'em off until he's shivering in the breeze. We sneaks up to Dug's back door, and everything is as peaceful as can be.

"Let me go around alone, Hen," says he. "I'll tell 'em that you're out hunting for me. Sabe? After uh little while you come in all out uh breath."

I sets there for uh while. When I decides it's time to make the play, I runs plumb around the town to get winded, and then I runs right into the place. Chuck is setting on the bar, replacing the cork in uh bottle, and he's all alone.

"Where's all the folks?" I asks.

"What I want to know is what are yuh going to do with them clothes, Hen?" he remarks. "I told yuh to hold 'em—not retain 'em."

I realizes just then that I'm still hanging on to them Italian garments, and I throws 'em under uh card-table. Just as I reaches over and takes the bottle from Chuck I happens to glance in the mirror, and I sees the back door begin to open. Inch by inch she comes open, and in comes uh six-shooter followed by uh hand.

I sets plumb silent, and next comes uh face like uh harvest moon, which I recognizes as being Muley's. Muley looks about as ferocious as uh milk-cheese, and if I didn't know he had murder in his heart I'd uh laughed right out.

As it was I felt uh vacant spot in my stummick, and when I tries to clear my throat, easy-like, it sounds like uh novice fussing with the E string of uh fiddle.

"*Wow!*"

Chuck turned his head toward the glass, saw what I was staring at, and he simply ducks his head and twists plumb under that table like uh prairie-dog dodging uh bullet. I followed suit. At least I did it as near like Chuck as possible, but I lands on the back of my neck and sprains myself all the way down to my toes.

"Yah-h-h!" whoops Muley. "Yuh will try to murder me, will yuh!"

He trots toward our end of the table, and when I cranes my neck to look at Chuck I sees uh fair sight. Chuck has grabbed the bridge yuh use in making uh pool shot that yuh can't reach with your arms, and he shoves it out and between Muley's legs as he trots past.

I sees Muley's boots leave the floor, and land. His gun goes spinning off across the floor, with me right on its trail. I sets up on the bar and rubs my aching neck.

Chuck crawls on top of the table and grins down at Muley, who makes uh few groans and sets up. He feels of his head from several angles and looks around.

"Chuck, you're uh ornery pup," states Muley, in uh tired voice. "Honest, you're uh danged yaller pup."

"You ain't got no right to talk about pups, Muley," grins Chuck. "You're uh regular Injun assassin, you are: sneaking up on two defenseless persons like me and Henry. You savage!"

"Well, go on and kill me," wails Muley, noticing that I got his gun in my hand.

"Whom me and Chuck would destroy we first makes fairly drunk," says I, hauling out the bottle. "Have uh little shot?"

"That's my choice uh weapons," states Muley, getting slowly and painfully to his feet. "What did yuh shoot at me for, Chuck? What yuh running around in your drawers that away for? Why don't——"

Muley stops and we all listens. Down the street comes yelps and shots, and the rattle of horses running. We races for the door to see what's going on, and I find out. I'm in the lead and just as I hits the door I meets Ajax. He's lost all his clothes and his good nature, and he goes through

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my legs like uh hounded wolf. I lights setting down, just in time to feel the loop of uh rope whip around my arms, and the next second I'm lifted off the porch, and down the road I goes, sliding and bumping on the end of uh rope.

Part uh me is broiled to uh turn when the race ends, and I loosens the loop. I'm sort of fatigued over the whole thing, and I sort uh lolls in the dust until Telescope Tolliver lights uh match over my recumbent form.

"My ——!" says he.

"Henry Clay Peck," I corrects him.

"What you doing here, Hen?" he gasps. "Where'd you come from?"

"You ought to know," I snaps right back at him. "We started at the same time. What did yuh think was on your rope?"

"Chuck. I thought I caught Chuck Warner."

"Poor Chuck," says I. "Ain't he been through enough tonight without you wanting to drag him to death?"

"What hard luck?" asks Telescope.

"Didn't yuh hear about the wild man? Ain't yuh seen him, Telescope?"

"Henry," says he, "this ain't no time to lie about things."

"This ain't no lie," says I. "Chuck runs into this wild person out back uh Dug's. It knocks him down, takes his clothes, and poor Chuck has been wandering around in the cold ever since. I been hunting for him, and when I finds him we goes down to Dug's, and Muley sneaks in behind us and tries to kill us both. Is everybody loco tonight?"

"Gosh! I told 'em that it wasn't Chuck," he declares. "That thing was too active for Chuck. We was chasing it when I roped you, Hen. Didn't you see it?"

"I didn't see nothing," says I. "Me and Chuck have been wronged."

"Get on behind me," says he. "This bronc will carry double."

"I'll walk," I replies. "I been setting down too much lately."

WE MANAGES to pilgrim back to Dug's, and worms our way inside. Seems like everybody in Paradise is in there. We claws our way to the center, where the argument is the thickest, and there we sees Chuck Warner, half his underclothes missing, standing there with uh rope around his neck. Everybody is asking questions, cussing, and telling what they'd do under them circumstances.

"Take this rope off my neck!" demands Chuck. "I ain't done nothing."

"You danged near killed me," proclaims Mighty Jones from where he sets on the bar, and adjusts uh bandage around his head.

"You've done uh plenty, young feller," states Bill McFee. "I reckon that when Muley Bowles gets conscious again we'll find out some more things against yuh."

"Did Muley get hurt?" yelps Telescope, and the crowd parts to let us in where Muley is laid out on the pool table.

Muley's got uh sweet look on his lips, and while we gazes on his beauty his lips move and he whispers this rime:

"The pale old moon is shining bright,
On meadows where the violets lay.
The icebergs glimmer in the light,
'Tis Springtime, love, the first uh May.
The sheeplets gambol on the grass,
The black bear sleeps and sucks his paw,
The blizzard sweeps along the pass.
It's the warmest Summer I ever saw."

"Muley," says Telescope, removing his hat, reverent-like, "you must uh been hit awful hard to mulligan up the calendar thataway."

Dug Chaffin horns his way in and pours some hooch into Muley's mouth. Muley lets that glass uh poison trickle down his throat, licks his lips and sets up.

"Huh!" he snorts, looking at the assemblage. "What seems to be the big idea—waking uh feller up at this time uh—say, where did the blame thing go?"

"What blame thing?" asks somebody.

"Goriller," states Muley. "Danged old hairy goriller."

Bill McFee turns to the crowd and shrugs.

"I'm uh liar if I know what to think. We chased what we thought was Chuck Warner all over town. We lost him over by the depot and has to pesticate uh lot before we gets him uh going again. Hang Padden's wolf hound got on the track, too, and lost most of his tail. If that thing didn't have on Chuck's clothes I'll eat my boots."

"I told yuh we was wrong, Bill," states Weinie Lopp. "When we got on the trail the second time I distinctly saw Chuck or somebody with Chuck's clothes on, duck behind the depot. We follered something, but what was it?"

"Maybe we follered Hen Peck," offers Doughgod.

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"Hen was right here," states Muley. "You fellers wasn't chasing neither Chuck or Hen, 'cause they was right here laughing at me all the time."

"What was they laughing at you for?" asks Bill.

"I-I-I—they was laughing at me for tripping gaily over the bridge."

"Never mind him—he's been hit too hard to be serious," remarks Bill McFee, holding up that Italian's clothes. "What I want to know is—who wears clothes like these? I found 'em under that card table. Who do they belong to, eh?"

"Dats uh my uh suit. Geev uh to me, you sonn-of-uh-gonn! You tak uh my Ajax! You break uh my heart—I break uh you head!"

There before us stands Pedro Adonis Feretti, with tears in his eyes and murder in his heart. He's got what's left uh Chuck's clothes on, and as he makes his oration he whales away at Bill's head with uh rock as big as his fist.

Bill ducks and the rock smashes right into Dug's mirror and bounces down behind the bar, but it don't thump when it hits—just makes sort of uh chug.

"*Chee-e-e-e-e! Wakie, wakie, wakie!*" comes uh voice from behind the bar.

Up comes two hairy hands, grips the top of the bar, and Ajax is before us. He rubs the side of his head and makes faces at us.

"Coom uh, Ajax," croons Pedro, and then he starts an oration in that foreign lingo.

Ajax listens, serious-like for uh while, scratches his stummick, and slips off the bar.

He seems undecided for uh minute and then walks over and shakes hands, solemn-like, with Chuck. He takes hold of Pedro's hand and them two went out of our lives forever. They took them speckled clothes. There ain't uh word said for some time after they're gone. Every one is busy with their own thoughts, and Chuck slips the rope off his neck and sighs deep-like.

"Gentlemen," says he, "there goes your ancestor."

"Darwin said that man came after monkey," observes Telescope.

"If they didn't come any nearer to getting him than we did we sure ain't closely related to 'em," says Bill McFee.

"It sure strikes me that the Warner tribe ain't progressed much," states Muley. "Looking at that animile and Chuck I'm forced to sing yuh these few lines:

"If punchers sprung from monkeys
They hadn't far to spring.
For all the difference I can see
Is in the character of the thing.
If uh monkey took Chuck Warner's job,
It's uh cinch he could qualify
In everything that Chuck can do,
Except to tell uh lie."

"You poeted some truth that time, Muley," laughs Mike. "He called that monkey Ajax but it ought to uh been Climax."

"Ajax was uh Greek," states old Judge Steele, wise-like. "He was supposed to be uh hy-iu scrapper. It is said that he defied the lightning."

"Did he get away with it?" asks Mighty Jones, fussing with his bandage. "His namesake sure could. He brought the Milky Way down to old man Jones' oldest son."

"Say, is Chuck Warner here?" inquires Abe Mallory, the station agent, from the doorway.

He catches sight uh Chuck, and holds out some clothes in his hand.

"Here's something for yuh, Chuck. Uh crazy-looking Italian shoved 'em in my window uh while ago, and yells something about giving 'em back. I knowed they're yours on account of the chaps. That shirt looks like it had been monkeyed with."

"I thank yuh," says Chuck. "Monkeyed with is right. It's uh good thing them chaps were made uh——"

Chuck runs his finger down in one chaps pocket, and hauls out uh roll uh bills. He looks foolish-like at me and then shoves 'em down in his pocket.

"Where'd yuh get the roll, Chuck?" asks Muley. "Does all that legal tender belong to you?"

"Nope," grins Chuck, wiggling his ears. "The man that owns it has left town, and I can't give it back to him, so I reckon it's what you'd call—uh—uh—ancestral rights. I'm un honest man, and if that little Italian ever shows up I'll have it for him. I'd admire to buy us all uh little drink out of the interest."

"I'll take sody water," states Mighty.

"Sody water!" yelps Dug. "Who wants to drink sody water at uh time like this?"

"I do," declares Mighty. "I drinks it once in self-defense, and now I wants to drink uh toast to——"

"Pedro Adonis Feretti," finishes Chuck. "I might of said to drink to Ajax, Mighty, but I've found out that it don't pay to monkey with your ancestors."

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The Luck of Forty-Four

By

RUBY ERWIN LIVINGSTON

MY FIRST glimpse of "Forty-Fo," or Joshua Dawson, was in a crowded courtroom when he stood up to receive sentence. It was the old story of a free-for-all fight over a negro crap-game, in which one negro had been killed by a powerful blow from Dawson's fist.

There had been little chance of getting at the real truth, for the witnesses told conflicting stories. But all agreed that Dawson had been winning all the stakes, and that the murdered negro, caught cheating, had started trouble. None of them knew much more about it, because those who were able ran. The jurymen filed into the courtroom and the foreman addressed the judge—

"Your Honor, we, the jury, find the defendant guilty of murder, with extenuating circumstances, and recommend him to the mercy of the court."

The judge ordered Dawson to stand, and asked if there was any reason why sentence should not be passed upon him. Dawson stood up timidly to his six-feet-three, twisted his big hands till his knuckles cracked, and said:

"No sah, I reckon not, yo' Honeh, cep'n I di'n' rully mean to kill 'im. An' hones', Judge, dat niggeh knowed I thowed de sevm——"

"That will do," ordered the judge. "I hereby sentence you to forty-four years at hard labor in the penitentiary. Mr. Sheriff, remove the prisoner."

Dawson bowed with a faint smile which seemed to show that, with the quaint philosophy of his race, he realized that it was a joke, even though it was at his own expense.

Right here I guess I'd better tell you that I'm warden at the biggest camp on the convict farm of one of the Southwestern States. There was an unusually large number of men to be sent from this particular county, and I stopped off on my way down to the camp to help the sheriff see 'em over.

As I stepped into the corridor to have a word with the sheriff, I heard Dawson saying, "Forty-fo yeahs soun' lak a mighty long time. Reckon I betteh take a good look aroun', 'cause 'tain't likely I'll eveh see dis place no mo'. Mah luck's done lef' me. If I'd 'a' stopped de game when I fust los' dat rabbit's foot, wouldn't nuffin happened. Now mah luck's gone fo' good."

We took the prisoners down next day, Dawson among them. In the days that followed I soon saw where Dawson's besetting sin lay. He was an inveterate gambler, and the luckiest fellow at dice I ever saw. The men played nearly every night, for the big stockade was well lighted, and Forty-Fo', as he was nick-named from his sentence, would invariably win his hatful of small change and tobacco. Once I reprimanded him for the gambling. After listening respectfully, he flashed his white teeth at me in a good-natured grin, and said:

"But, Cap'n, I jes cyan't keep f'm lovin' dem li'l bones. Jes look how putty dey rolls! Bet yo' two bits I c'n roll de Li'l Joe. Bet yo' fo' bits! Bet me?"

Before I could refuse he twirled the dice deftly, and threw the three. And because I liked the fellow—he was a steady worker—I was silly enough to hand over the half.

"Looks like you'd let those things alone. They're what brought you here. Seems

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to me you'd see 'Texas Babe' (the negro he killed) every time you throw," I said.

"Lawsy, no sah, Cap'n. Dat Texas niggeh'd a had a rope 'roun' his neck anyhow, if it hadn't been fo' me. He done made 's brags 'bout killin' two niggeh wimmen in Texas. I seen de razeh whut he carried. But I couldn't let 'im have dat dolleh an' forty cents, when dey all knowed I thowed de sevm. I jes' happened to hit close to de heart, I reckon. If I'd a jes thought an' hit 'im on de haid, 'twould 'a' been all right. But it's too late now!"

The next year was a wet year, and the river overflowed. Our cotton was just about six inches high, and looking fine. So was the corn. But both were ruined, for the water stood on the fields for days; and the overflows always contain a lot of alkali, brought down from the Northwest. We planted the crops over. The men worked well, but were discouraged, for a good deal of levee had to be rebuilt, and the mud and slime caused a lot of chills and fever.

It was then that Forty-Fo' was made a trusty and put in charge of a crew. He knew that the best way to get a Dixie negro to work is to let him sing and work to the rhythm. Forty-Fo had a big, mellow bass voice, and when he was ready to throw up dirt on the levee, he lined up his men, ten on a side, and made ready to sing.

"Git dem shovels ready now; right side fust, den de lef'; an' don' one o' you niggehs miss de time. Ready now!"

And he'd begin in his powerful, melodious voice, the others chiming in, carrying the soprano, tenor and alto:

> Steamboat Bill, steamin' down de Mississippi,
> Steamboat Bill, a mighty man was he.

And the *thud, thud* of the dirt kept time to the song. At the end Forty-Fo' would shout, "Lay down," and down the shovels would clank, while their wielders would mop their brows for a few moments of rest.

One day I heard the song stop short at a warning shout, followed by curses from Forty-Fo, while every man pounded at something on the ground.

"What's the matter there? Why aren't you working, Forty-Fo'," I asked.

He looked up, his face ashen with fear—

"Jes looky heah, Cap'n, whut wuz tryin' to cross my path!"

I saw the battered remains of a kind of black beetle, commonly known as the Bess-bug.

"Is that what all this commotion is about? Get back to work," I commanded.

"Yas, sah, Cap'n; yas, sah. But don't yo' know it's bad luck when a Bess-bug comes aroun'? An ef he cross yo' path yo' sho' gwine die—an' dat putty soon. But we got 'im killed fo' he got across. But, Cap'n, somethin'll sho' happen to de levee if yo' make us work here any mo' today."

Another man, to show his authority, might have forced them to continue there. But I knew the hold that superstition has on the negro; so I said:

"You needn't think you'll get out of work for a measly bug! Go across there where the first white crew is at work, and I'll let you change places with them. Now, get a move on."

"Yes, sah, Cap'n; thanky. Git on dere, yo' triflin' niggehs—quit foolin' 'roun' all day!"

And away he went with his gang.

No sooner had we replanted the crops and repaired the levees than another overflow came. This was repeated every few weeks, until we gave up the idea of making a crop, and tried only to rebuild the levees. Many acres had caved in, and the main channel of the river threatened to cut through and ruin rich plantations.

THEN finally, in the Winter, when we were beginning to feel safe, there came the most disastrous overflow we had known for thirty years. We were the highest of five camps, each sheltering about three hundred and fifty men. I had faith in the new levees. Nor did I think that the river would keep on rising; even if the rains did persist. The lowlands around us were flooded for miles, for there had been a break in the levee to the east of us. When the water kept backing up for three days, I got a phone message from the warden of Camp Four, three miles below us.

"I've got to get my men out," he said. "We're in a current where North Fork has broken through, and if it gets much stronger this whole stockade will go. Can you take my men over there?"

I replied that I could by crowding, and he wound up by asking for boats and guards.

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My men were getting restless and uneasy. I realized the seriousness of the situation, although I knew that the levee could stand several feet more water. We had plenty of provisions and were fairly comfortable, but were seven miles from a railway station, and the track was partly under water. Besides, it's no small matter to move sixteen hundred convicts, even if we could get cars. We were short on boats, and those we had were too small to cross the deep currents in many places.

For several days many refugees had passed in skiffs, some of them a pitiful sight, with barely a change of clothes to their backs. And over all, the rain, rain, rain!

To one who has never experienced an overflow of the Mississippi, what followed can hardly be pictured. The nights were made hideous by the bellowing of cattle and the neighing of horses, all being driven out to higher ground. The drivers, yelling and swearing, rode splashing about with torches and lanterns. And through the clamor came the roar and boom of the angry river. Thousands of acres were being washed away, and rich men grew poor in a single night.

I knew that if I could get the men to Vinton I could probably guard them a day or two in public buildings. Meanwhile, I must make them have confidence in me. They were growing bold in their grumbling, and I decided to call them together and talk to them. When I went to summon them I heard loud laughter, and cries of—

"Me for Forty-Fo'—ten cents on old Forty-Fo'—go to it, old boy!"

And down in the middle of the floor was Forty-Fo' and half a dozen negroes and whites, with the men crowding about them, betting on a crap game. But Forty-Fo' heard nothing. His eyes were on the dice, and he talked to them continually.

"Come on, sev'm! Big Dick from Boston! Come, baby—now he come! Li'l Joe; I wants yo' now! Roll out, putty Li'l Joe; I'se waitin' fo' you! Dah, now, gen'lemen; I hates to take yo' money, but I reckon it's mine."

And he raked the nickels, dimes, bandannas and Jews-harps into his hat.

"Le's have one more try, gen'lemen! Ain't yo' all got no mo' money?"

Then he saw me.

"Jes looky heah, Cap'n, whut I win—" and he held up a rabbit's foot. "I'll sho' have luck now, won't I?"

"Put up those dice, Forty-Fo', and don't let me see them again soon," I said.

"Yes, sah, Cap'n, right now. Come on home, babies," he crooned to the ivory cubes as he placed them lovingly in his pocket, and started singing:

> Roll, roll, roll dem bones,
> Roll 'em on de square!
> Roll 'em on de sidewalk,
> De streets or anywhere;
> We roll 'em in the mo'nin',
> We roll 'em out at night;
> Yes, we roll dem bones all day long,
> When de cops am not in sight.

Calling for order, I said:

"Boys, we are all dry and none of us is hungry. I've always done the best I could for you, and though that levee is good for two feet more of water, we must prepare for emergencies. In the meantime, I am here to take care of you—and I'll do it or die trying!"

Back among the negroes I caught a flash of white teeth as a big voice shouted:

"Rah for the Cap'n! Yip!"

Several men joined Forty-Fo's cheer, and my heart felt lighter. Even the sympathy of a convict is encouraging.

Just as the men were dispersing there came a long, blood-curdling howl from the dog kennel. Never have I heard a more direful wail from a canine throat. Forty-Fo' jumped, rolled his eyes and dashed into the yard. He sought me out later and said, in a hoarse whisper—

"Jes 'tween yo' an' me, Cap'n, trouble's comin' sho!"

"Why do you think so?" I asked.

"Dat houn' howlin' like dat! I ran out to see which one 'twas, an' dat black un' was settin' lookin' at the levee. Yo' know he don' howl 'thout some reason. It sho' is a bad sign, Cap'n." And he refused to be comforted.

I looked out as Forty-Fo' spoke, and was just in time to see the telephone poles leading to Vinton swept away like straws. My heart stood still—for it meant but one thing; the levee along the lake to the south of us had given away, and the current eventually would break its way through our own levee. We were in a bend of the river and completely cut off.

I put the men to work piling sandbags on the top of the levee, and had them tear

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down a big barn and make rafts. Here, again, Forty-Fo' showed his worth, for he worked like a demon, "makin' boats for de big scursion." And whenever a man showed reluctance about work, Forty-Fo's threat to "tho' 'im in de river to give 'im a bath" was all that was necessary.

It was some time before the men noticed the telephone line down, and even then not one mentioned it. My little talk had done its work.

The water had been up to the stockade for two days. That morning it had measured fourteen inches in the yard; now, at three o'clock, it measured seventeen. And the river, too, was rising, though at a slower rate. The situation was getting desperate.

Well, there was only one thing to do, now that the wires were down—call for a volunteer to take a skiff and attempt to row the seven miles to Vinton for help.

I took my field-glass and looked down toward the lake and Camp Four. What I saw did not tend to reassure me. It was a stockade—moving in the swirling current of water. There was no time for delay. I told the other warden what I was going to do, and asked him to call up the men.

"All right," he answered. "But I don't believe a living human could get past that current."

"Well, somebody will have a chance to try," I replied.

WHEN they were before me I said: "Boys, I believe some one ought to go to Vinton for help. From what I can see, I think the lake levee has gone out, and while our levee will hold twenty-four hours or longer, I think we'd better get out of here in the morning. The telephone line is gone, and unless the Vinton folks hear about the lake levee they may not come for us as they promised. It's a hard job. Think it over, and step forward if there is one who will go."

The men looked dubious, and for a moment no one stirred. Then Forty-Fo' rose and stepped forward.

"Why, Cap'n, I'll go for yo'," he said, almost eagerly.

"But, Dawson, I fear you don't understand. It's taking your life in your own hands—there's some mighty swift currents to cross below here. You may not make it. You don't have to go, you know."

"Yas, sah; I know dat. But I don' 'mount to much no how—I ain't got no fam'ly like some of 'em. Mah wife done got a 'voce an' married again; an' I don' know whah mah chillun is. I'm gittin' old, an' 'tain't likely I'l ever be free no moh——"

He paused, and there was in his eyes the look of hopeless misery you see in caged brutes. Men lose hope after they have worn the stripes five or six years, only in some it brings the brute determination to fight—fight to the last.

"You's the best frien' I got, Cap'n, an' I'd be glad to go fo' yo'," he continued wistfully. "Anyway, I don' want yo'-all to stay here an' drown jes 'cause I wouldn' go."

"All right, Forty-Fo', if you're willing. You'll have to start right away to get there before dark. Some of you boys get out that new skiff and the best oars."

As we walked to the doorway he said to me:

"Cap'n, in case I don' get back, you'll know I done my level best; an' in the head end o' my mattress is a little change—if the's anything lef' ob me, wisht yo'd send me back home, please sah. 'Tain't fuh, yo' know, Cap'n. Yo' sho' been good to me, an' I'se glad to do what I can fo' yoh."

I gripped the big black fellow's hand. I remembered the day when I had turned suddenly to find an old Sing-Sing man—a lifer—rushing at me with upraised shovel. Like lightning Forty-Fo' had thrown himself in front of me—a human shield! The shovel had struck him a glancing blow on the head, inflicting a long, jagged scar, from his forehead to his crown. Now, again, he was offering the supreme sacrifice, freely, unselfishly!

"Joshua Dawson," I said, clearing my throat, "you're a man clean through—the whitest one in the lot. And I know you're going to make it all right."

We were within ear-shot of some of the men, and I noticed that the negroes were rolling their eyes excitedly. This was no time for sentiment, or I'd have a panic on my hands.

"Forty-Fo'," I said, "I bet you four bits you can't throw Little Joe twice this time tomorrow. We'll have it out at Vinton."

I had said the right thing. Nothing could have roused him like that. The white teeth flashed, and he replied quickly:

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"Bet yo', Cap'n; bet yo'. Fo' o'clock tomorrow evenin'."

I cautioned him to keep close to our levee, and he stepped into the boat, settled himself, opened his big mouth and started singing:

Steamboat Bill steamin' down de Mississippi,
I'se a gwine to beat de record ob de Robert E. Lee.

The others joined in, and just then the sun came out for the first time in days. I pointed to it and shouted to Forty-Fo'—

"Good luck!"

He nodded and smiled back, his superb muscles twinkling through his sleeves as he pulled a steady stroke.

I sent the men back to work and tried to feel at ease, but ever came the thought—

"Had I done right to send him on this fool's errand?"

Time passed slowly. Try as I would I could not forget that look in Forty-Fo's eyes. Nor could I forget how the chaplain only last Sunday had asked if some one would lead in prayer, and, to my surprise, I had heard Forty-Fo's voice, faltering but penitent. Now, I was mighty glad he had prayed.

Just before dark I slipped out, climbed to the guard's post at the top of the stockade, and swept the horizon with my field-glass. There was not a sign of life in any direction. The only moving objects were bits of floating driftwood, roofs, or the bloated carcass of an animal. I put down the glass, and found myself asking the Lord to take care of Forty-Fo' while I couldn't. Oh, well, we'd all drown like rats in a trap anyway. He never could make it across that current.

As I went back into the mess-room a screech owl's shrill cry sent a chill to my very marrow bones. By nine o'clock I abandoned all hope of the boats, and retired for a sleepless night. Outside, I could hear the lapping, lapping of the water against the stockade, slowly creeping nearer, like the stealthy tread of a panther who, sure of his prey, licks his chops in anticipation. It was only a question of hours now until the levee would break—and here my brain refused to work any further.

Toward dawn sleep came to soothe my harassed nerves. But I was soon roused by a loud halloo. Stepping out of bed into four inches of water, I waded to the window and looked out. Five boats were coming across the swirling waters. As they landed my men began whooping and yelling like mad. A big deputy came alongside and hailed me.

"Got here at last, Cap'n," he called up to me. And then he shouted to the man, "We'll get you out all right, boys; we've got the Government dredge to tow us across the current."

I hurried down eagerly.

"Forty-Fo' made it all right, did he?" I inquired.

The man looked blank.

"Can't tell you," he said. "Somebody, evidently a negro, telephoned in from a little town below that you were marooned and needed help. Said to tell the cap'n that Little Joe had brought him luck and got him free."

Mechanically, I gave orders to load the men. Forty-Fo' must be safe; but I was puzzled. If he had been the man who phoned, he had evidently meant his message as a jocular farewell. And I had trusted that darkey!

It goes hard with me to lose faith in one I have trusted. Forty-Fo' had never failed me in anything, and I could not account for this. Though I advertised for his capture, he disappeared as completely as if the flood had swallowed him.

TWO years later I left the prison and went back to my farm. Prices for cattle were good, and I bought and shipped a lot. On a trip to the middle of the State to buy yearlings I visited a little town remote from the railroad—a sleepy little place, where the inhabitants were too leisurely to inquire industriously into the history of any newcomer, black or white.

I had entered a stable to look at some cattle, when from the dusky corner of a stall I heard the click of dice, and a voice chanting a tale that I had heard before:

"Come on, sev'm! Big Dick! Big Dick f'm Boston!" Then, "Now Little Joe. Come now, Li'l Joe! Li'l Joe—now he come!"

Only one voice could croon it like that. Quickly I stepped into the stall, and a sprawling black shape scrambled up hurriedly. A row of teeth gleamed, two eyes flashed good-naturedly, and Forty-Fo' said:

"Wal, ef it ain't the Cap'n! How yo'-all come on?"

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I stared, mute. Swift and bitter recriminations had risen to my lips at the sound of the man's voice, but the sight of his wistful eyes and friendly grin drove every vindictive thought from my mind. I thought of the lifer with the shovel, and the look in Forty-Fo's eyes as he shoved that frail skiff into the twistings of a treacherous, yellow flood that I might be saved from drowning—and a lump rose in my throat.

"Hello, Forty-Fo'," I said, huskily. "Where did you come from?"

He rose, still grinning, genuinely glad to see me, and not in the least aware that, in the eyes of the law he was a hunted man and a fugitive.

"Right heah, Cap'n, right heah. I live at de next place. Been heah ever since I lef' yo'. How's de boys at de camp?"

"Never mind about the boys," I said, "why didn't you go to Vinton when I sent you? Give an account of your conduct."

"Why, jes natchully couldn' git dah, Cap'n! Dat sure was an awful flood. Ole Noah ain't nevah seed no flood like dat. An' I didn't have no ark, neideh. My li'l skiff struck a snag an' turned oveh, an' I ketched hol' of a wire fence whah de wateh wuzn't so swiff, an' hung on dah till I'se mos' froze to death. It kep gittin' dahk, an' de screetch owls 'gin to holleh, an' dis heah niggeh like to fell in de wateh frum shakin'.

"Lawdy, but I sho' was scared! I wisht if I had to die, it could be back dah wid de boys whah it's kindah sociable. Nex' thing I knows, 'long come a barn floatin' close to me, an' settin' on de roof is a yellow woman an' a ole wet rooster. 'Ketch a-holt, niggah', she hollehs out to me, an' pokes at me de end of a board. I grabs it, an' climbs up on dat roof, wid it all de time rockin' fit to thow us bofe off in de wateh! We sails on, an' by an' by we comes to a little place down-stream whah dat barn hits somet'n an' stops.

"Dat yellow woman grabs me aroun' de neck an' yells, 'Man, we's drownded now, sho!' But I says, 'Wait, honey, till I roll mah bones an' see if we'se goin' to git out o' heah.' An' up comes Li'l Joe! Den we scrapes 'gainst de mud, an' I knows we'se all right. I wades out, an' gits de yellow woman out, an' de ole rooster, an' den I telephones to dem folks at Vinton to send some boats after yo'-all, quick. Dat's about all."

"But, why didn't you come back, Forty-Fo'?" I insisted. "Didn't we treat you pretty well?"

The negro scratched his head and looked foolish.

"Lawsy, yes, Cap'n," he declared. "Yo' allus treat me fine. Yo'se about de bes' friend I got. Hones' to God, Cap'n, I did rully inten' to come back, but yo' see, boss, dis likely yellow woman what I foun' on de roof, she got kind o' foolish 'bout me, an' she tell me she's got a good place up heah—house an' pig-pen, an' nine good washin's. An' when Li'l Joe bring me luck like dat, Cap'n, I jes' nachully ain't got de nerve to turn it down."

Here a sudden thought struck him that my feelings might be hurt, and he added hastily:

"I 'low, tho', maybe, dat if dis yellow gal dat I married git so she cyant work, or anything like dat—why, I might come back, Cap'n. But right now——"

The grin widened to encompass most of the black countenance.

"Mah luck's a holdin' fine, an' I still win a li'l wid de bones 'casionally."

I turned away; it was clearly my duty to apprehend this escaped convict and return him to the penitentiary. But I had not the heart to do it. Somehow I felt that whatever Forty-Fo's savage muscles might have done, his soul was as free from guilt as the simple soul of a little child.

"Forty-Fo', do you know that I ought to take you back?" I asked.

"You ain't gwine to gimme away, Cap'n——"

His face expressed absolute faith in me.

"How tight can you shut your mouth?" I asked pointedly.

"Jes lak a snappin' turtle, lak dis, Cap'n," he illustrated.

"Then keep it that way, if you want to stay here."

I said good-by and turned to go when Forty-Fo' called after me:

"Cap'n, I los' my bet," he said, "dat bet we made de day I lef—yo' 'member? You won my fo' bits, an', Cap'n, de money's in de head end o' my ol' mattress. You jus' git it out an' pay yo'self dat bet, will yo' please, sah?"

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The Real Sport

by GEORGE L. CATTON
and HARRY MOORE

HE CAME up to the Trail-end Cabin on the stage, and Davie Holt helped him to carry in his dunnage. He wore a short beard, untrimmed for weeks, and coarse heavy clothing in keeping; and Searson and McCourt frowned. And, though he seemed to be considering "whether," he "bought" when his turn came. So in spite of his diminutive stature he fitted inconspicuously into, and was welcomed by the half-dozen impecunious big-game hunters who had come in the day before. Then when he registered "Alva Ballantyne Long" as the title of his five feet of skin and bones, Searson's and McCourt's frowns changed to grins.

As much alike as two bull-moose, Searson and McCourt were a pair. They came in together, and kept pretty well together for the twenty-four hours the weather kept them indoors. And they swore together when they learned that there was not enough loose money in the unusual small gathering to frame up even an interesting poker game. Searson and McCourt had relied on the other fellow's money to help defray their personal expenses; and had won a few dollars from Davie Holt. But—pshaw! Then when the eagerly awaited stage came in with only one passenger—and such a passenger!

Still, Searson and McCourt were after moose. Everything else was incidental. When they found themselves at the same table for supper with Long and Davie Holt, their smiles returned. They joined in the discussion of high-power rifles, the habits of moose, and the chances of reasonable weather. Then when the soothing effects of a good smoke on satisfied stomachs began to take effect, and Davie Holt suggested that they four form a party to investigate the possibilities of Black Valley, they became quite enthusiastic. Only Long shook his head.

"I'd give my—my rifle if I could make it," Long sighed regretfully; "but I guess I'll have to travel alone. I'm a diabetic. I can't stand a man's day in the bush. You fellows go ahead—I wish you the best spreads obtainable, but I'll have to poke along by myself and take my time. I'd only be in your way—hold you back."

"*Whuh! whuh! whuh! whuh!*"—that was the way Searson laughed. "Look at what says he'll be in the way! Hold us back! Why, you little whiffet! You're only twenty-two caliber if you was fat! I'll bet a box of shells that young Holt there can toss you into one of the canoes and tote the whole outfit across Long Rapids without a rest."

"An' when Holt gets tired carryin' you," McCourt hastened to add, "I'll tuck you into my knife-shield in my belt an' forget you're there. What about it, Holt?"

Davie Holt got up and stretched his long arms vigorously above his head.

"I'm packing his dunnage in with mine tonight," he grinned. "If he ain't up and ready before daylight in the morning, I'm going to steal his clothes."

Alva Ballantyne Long laughed. His right hand went out impulsively.

"All right, then, boys," he acquiesced, smiling. "I'll do my best to keep up, but—" and he shrugged his shoulders whimsically—"I've warned you, you know."

That night a sharp frost gave promise

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of a break in the rainy spell. The following morning daybreak found Searson and McCourt in one canoe and Long and Davie in another. Before them lay two days of hard work—forty miles of swift water broken by long tortuous portages—to Black Valley. But trappers' and Indians' reports were unanimous on the wealth of the moose population and everybody whistled.

And Searson and McCourt and Davie lived up to their promise. Long did nothing—they wouldn't let him touch a thing. Searson and McCourt divided his packs between them, and Davie refused to allow him to paddle and shouldered their canoe across the portages alone. Nor would they allow Long to help with the camp when they arrived at Black Valley. He had to sit on a log and watch the bacon frying, and eat—when "the eats" were ready.

YET Long more than made up for the extra work his useless presence entailed. Long had traveled much, apparently. His inexhaustible fund of funny stories, and his optimistic ability to locate instantly the humorous side of every mishap, kept the party in roars of laughter. And even when they woke up the first morning in camp, to find that the bad weather had returned, he found the gold lining to the clouds.

"Wet leaves for a silent trail," he grinned. "Keep your backs dry and you won't catch cold. And—and I'll have a big hot supper ready for you when you get back."

"Why—why—?" Davie started to question.

"No," Long smiled whimsically; "I won't go today. I didn't sleep well at all last night, and I'm rather weary after the long trip. I'll be ready for anything tomorrow morning."

And he stuck to that. Though they all argued long with him, he refused to be beguiled, as he put it, into taking any chances with his health so far away from civilization. Nor did he miss anything. Neither of the other three fired a shot all day.

Then the next morning Long rolled out of his blankets along with the rest. Threatening weather wasn't going to stop him. He had come for moose, and he was going to take back at least one spread if he had to swim for it. They left camp at daybreak in a cold, misty drizzle.

Now, Black Valley was one huge swamp. Except for a network series of shale ridges, the square miles of bog lay all Summer feet deep under the Spring floods from the water-sheds on either side, and raised a dense crop of lily-pads for moose. And the moose knew it.

Long got the first—a twelve-point bull—about midday. Davie won the second with a sharp staccato of five shots. The third was Searson's; he got it late in the afternoon on his way back to join the rest. That ended the luck. And as usual, bad luck began where good luck left off.

First, Long played out—the day's grind and the excitement of the kill proved too much for him. Next, the drizzle of rain increased to a steady downpour, and froze with the coming darkness into a blinding snow-storm. Then Searson, who was leading, led them—where?

They never found the camp. Old "Frenchy" Berard found it a week after. . . .

Winter sometimes shuts down phenomenally early on the Baptiste River. And when it does!

When night came, and the driving snow, Davie Holt threw up a windbreak of birch poles and cedar boughs and made Long as comfortable as possible. Searson and McCourt cut moose steaks and broiled them over a bed of glowing coals. But nobody said anything. Unconsciously, maybe, each in his own way was measuring his fellows. And a man's size is not in his beef—no man is bigger than his love for his fellow men.

It was Long who finally broke the silence. When the saltless meat was eaten and pipes smoked out, Long glanced from one to the other of his companions and quoted "The Troubled Trapper's Only Comment"—

"Fire's out, no kindling, and somebody spit in the ashes."

Then, receiving no reply, he tried again.

"Forty miles from home in a ragged shirt and no trains running."

McCourt looked at Searson and stole a glance at Davie.

"Forty miles is right!" he growled. "An' the walkin' ain't no city street! Look at that—that Winter!"

"Winter—nothing!" Long managed to

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laugh shortly in spite of his weakness. "The sun will be shining in the morning. It's only a local storm."

"The —— it is!" Searson sneered. "This ain't southern Ontario! Anyway——"

"We've got to stay here till daylight," McCourt interrupted hastily. "You can take the first watch, Holt, an' keep the fire roarin'. I'll relieve you at ten by my watch, an' Searson can relieve me at four. That's four hours apiece."

Davie nodded. But he didn't say anything. Davie was thinking. Coming in to the fire with an armful of wood a half-hour previous, Davie had overheard a whispered conversation between Searson and McCourt and—and even when McCourt relieved him of the watch Davie didn't speak.

The snow-storm thickened steadily. By ten o'clock it had ceased melting as it fell. It was a driving blizzard at midnight.

Long struggled to a sitting position, when the fire got low, and touched Davie on the shoulder.

"They've gone, Davie," he announced grimly.

Davie opened his eyes—eyes that blazed viciously in the light of the glowing coals.

"I know," he said. "I heard them framing it."

Long smiled.

" 'Self-preservation,' " he started to quote.

But Davie didn't hear him. Davie was out after wood.

When daylight came, Long was barely able to stand on his feet. The excitement—frequently fatal to those with his trouble—of the day before had aggravated his weakness till even his grin refused to respond to his will. He shook his head when Davie announced that he was ready to start.

"Better trot along, lad," he whispered feebly. "And if you can't find your way out in a couple of days don't—don't worry about me. I'll—I'll——"

"Shut up!" Davie snapped. "I'm the boss of this outfit now!" and he lifted Long to his feet. "I haven't got McCourt's knife-sheath to tuck you into, but we can't be far from the canoes. Those two —— won't take but one of them even if they should find them."

And with Long's diminutive body across his big square shoulders Davie Holt strode out into the snow.

That was the second day of the storm. It lasted four days. Tuesday afternoon the rain turned to snow, and Saturday night the thermometer on Frenchy Berard's trapper's cabin dropped to zero. Sunday morning. . . .

SUNDAY morning Frenchy Berard opened his door and stepped out into the sunlight. Below him Black Valley lay beneath one vast white blanket. On the right. . . .

Frenchy's eyes narrowed to slits, slits that shut out everything but the object their keenness was focused upon.

That dark object away off there on the snow was a bear. Or was it? Bears, when they sensed danger, often walked upright for quite long distances so that they could see over the tops of the bushes. Then, too, the broad, lumpy body was that of a bear, and the dropping, every few yards, to all fours. But—but a bear usually bundled along on all fours for a while after he dropped down, while that—that got up again immediately and. . . .

"*Sacré!*" Berard gasped; and tore down the hill.

Davie was down when Berard reached him, with Long, almost unconscious, sprawled across his neck. For four days, with very little rest at night, Davie had been supporting Long when Long could walk, and carrying him, and twenty pounds of moose-meat, when Long got off his feet. Yet in spite of his exhaustion Davie insisted on keeping going while the Frenchman raced ahead with Long. He was half-way up the hill when Berard came back for him. And the first thing Davie's eyes rested on when he entered the cabin were Searson's and McCourt's rifles. He recognized them.

"Where?" Davie gasped; "Where did you get those two rifles?"

Berard grinned.

"Ah buy heem," he replied slowly. "Two mans come Friday, an' dey say dat eet ees dey want one canoe. But dey have no money. Ah t'ink dat mahbe two rifles for one canoe eet ees *bon*—no?"

But Davie failed to answer. He was asleep. For four days Davie had been wandering in the storm, trying to find a trail on the network of shale ridges in Black Valley that would lead out—somewhere. And now that it was finished, Davie let go. He slept.

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That was Sunday morning. It was Monday noon before Davie climbed out of the blankets. It was Monday night before Long felt capable of talking. Then on Tuesday morning Long held an animated conversation in French with Berard; and when the Frenchman had left the cabin for something, Long called Davie over to his bunk.

"Searson and McCourt got one of the old fellow's canoes, Davie," Long smiled. But he's got another, and I've arranged with him to take you out tomorrow. I'll not be able to travel for a week at least, but there's no need of keeping you away from your sport, or business, or whatever you are going to do. The Frenchman's squaw can look after me till he gets back."

Davie's pipe came out of his mouth.

"Say!" he snorted good-naturedly, "Who's boss of this outfit? When I go—you go! I guess the job down in Toronto can wait till I get home."

For one long minute Long looked Davie straight in the eyes. Then he reached out and picked up his jacket. He ran his hand into a pocket and pulled out a salt-bag and a folded paper.

"Listen, Davie," he said quietly. "A week ago yesterday when we arrived down here and went into camp, I refused to go out with you fellows—you remember? I said I was tired out after the long trip, but that wasn't the reason. There's the reason, Davie."

He turned the bag out on the blankets.

Davie's pipe fell out of his hand. Ignorant as he was of metals in their native state even Davie knew raw gold when he saw it.

"It's the real pay, Davie," Long went on quickly. "There's a good half-million in sight and there's no telling what's underneath. It lies just back of our camp down there. There's the location," and he handed Davie the folded paper.

Davie studied the map a moment and passed it back.

"You're a lucky dog, Long," he grinned, fingering the specimens. "But what's that got to do with——"

"You don't understand!" Long snapped testily. "I staked the claim and posted the notices. All you've got to do is to register it above the name of Holt and Long and——"

"But—but—" Davie interrupted, amazed.

"Buts—nothing!" Long grinned. "Listen, Davie; I'm just an impecunious mineralogist. I never had anything all my life. I've spent twenty long years and ruined my health, looking for that yellow spot. And now I've found it. But——"

He paused. Then grimly:

"As much as I need it, Davie, it's going to lie there until some one else relocates it, unless——"

He thrust out his hand.

"Shake, Davie. It takes a real sport to stick like you did. Your a real sport! It's going to be Holt and Long, isn't it? You're still going to be a real sport? Your going to make it Holt and Long?"

Twenty minutes later, out on the sunny side of old Frenchy Berard's cabin Davie Holt decided that it wouldn't be Holt and Long. It would be Long and Holt.

"And he called me a real sport," Davie grinned. "But, moly hoses! If I'm a real sport—what is he?"

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The Bound Twigs

by L·PATRICK GREENE

Author of "The Snakes of Zari," "The White Kaffir," etc.

"I TELL thee, Zari, that it has come to my mind that the Great White Lord at Bulawayo is not altogether pleased at my friendship for thee."

The speaker was John Symes, a native commissioner in charge of the Shashi District of Rhodesia. A big man, standing well over six feet and weighing close to two hundred and fifty pounds, it was easily seen why the natives called him Incubu—the elephant. He was well over forty years of age, though he looked much younger. He wore a full black beard and thick bushy eyebrows—but the latter were not so thick as to obscure his expressive eyes.

Hard and searching though they were, they had withal a kindly twinkle so that the piccaninnies and women folk were emboldened to call him "Mushla amheyloe"—kind eyes. Eight long years had he spent in this district and thoroughly he knew his people—his children, he called them. They on their part had come to like this kindly, but sternly just man.

His first years had been full of difficulties, for he found another power, equally as strong as that of the white man, a power moreover which was opposed to the rule of the white man; so that when he gave an order, though the promise was given that the order should be fulfilled, many, many times the promise was broken and his plans brought to naught.

Zari, the witch-doctor, was this other power and Symes spent many troubled days and nights seeking how to overcome his adversary. The manner in which it was performed is a tale yet to be told. Sufficient that these two men were now the firmest of friends, working hand in hand for the welfare of their people.

Zari, Symes' companion, was an old man, well past the allotted three score years and ten. The natives all had it that he was born before time was. He had the reputation of being the most powerful witch-doctor in all Africa, and when clad in his full regalia—leopard skin, necklace of snakes' fangs and human teeth, and the rest—his appearance well bore out his reputation. Now as he sat before the fire with Symes he appeared just what he was—an old, and somewhat weary man, but his eyes had in them the light of youth and unutterable wisdom. In one respect the two men, the one a true specimen of the Anglo-Saxon race, the other a pure-blooded Matabele, were very much alike: they were both students and lovers of human nature.

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They represented between them in the district in which they lived the powers temporal and the powers spiritual, so closely interwoven it was hard to say where Zari's influence ended and Symes' began. Though the chief, one Melefe by name, was nominally sole ruler, he acted entirely on the advice of these two men.

The large fire besides which they were sitting was just outside Zari's hut, which seemed to be set in the midst of the forest though it was but a short distance to the large kraal of Melefe, the chief. It was night time and beyond the circle of light cast by the fire all was darkness. It was the policy of the two men to keep their meetings secret from the natives, and indeed their friendship was known to few. Here at Zari's dwelling-place they were free from all possible interruptions, for the witch-doctor's hut at night was a place to be shunned. Did not the spirits of the Great-Great meet with him there and impart to him their wisdom?

The harvest time was at hand and soon Symes should start on his tax-collecting tour of the district, and, as on former years, Symes had come to consult with Zari as to the amount of tax to be imposed upon the various villages. Had Symes' superiors known of these consultations, they would have thrown up their hands in indignation.

The white man's law said that every native should pay a poll tax, and a hut tax, also a percentage of the crops; but at these conferences Zari and Symes always discussed the financial ability to pay the taxes, and made allowances for extenuating circumstances. So that this man was excused perhaps fifty per cent. of his tax because his cattle had been partly destroyed by the plague; this man was excused all payment because the baboons had destroyed his crops—yet another would have his tax doubled because of some act of insubordination.

The last three years the crops had been exceedingly poor because of long spells of heavy rains, so that Symes had perforce to be lenient with his people. The smallness of his tax returns had called forth complaints from the powers that be. This year crops promised to be even poorer than those of the preceding years; hence Symes' premonition that he would be recalled.

This premonition was all the stronger because the chief commissioner who had appointed Symes to the district was away in England for a twelve-month leave of absence, and his substitute did not know Symes or the Matabele people. This man had heard rumors of Symes' friendship for the witch-doctor, and was amazed that a civil officer should form a friendship with a man whose arts were forbidden by the white man's laws.

"Yea, Zari, thus it is. The white chief is angry with me because I have failed to render the full tax to him. Also my friendship with thee is called in question."

"Ou! They are fools. Like children crying for the moon. How shall one take grain from empty storehouses? And if another come, what then? Can he by harsh words make the corn to grow, the plagues to cease? I tell thee, white friend, that should thy words be true, yet once again wilt thou come back to us. Not so easily can the bound twigs be separated."

Zari referred to the two twigs which long ago he had given to Symes as a token of their friendship, first binding them together, and making many charms over them.

Symes, as he arose to depart to his own hut, shook his head slowly and sorrowfully:

"Nay, Zari, it is the end. Perchance I have been too easy with my children. Who knows?"

THREE days later a strange white man with a large following of native police of a stranger tribe approached the village of Melefe. The stranger was a young man, about twenty-five years of age, clad in khaki and wearing a large sun helmet. His face was marred by a perpetual scowl of discontent; a weak man, hiding his weakness behind a bullying manner. He was evidently a person in authority for he rode on horseback, this is in a district where horsesickness was rampant; also his carriers were many and well clad.

As he rode he peered from side to side as though seeking something to shoot. Nearing the village he saw a small child playing with a dog, and in his eyes there gleamed a look of satisfaction. Bidding one of his men bring the dog and boy to him he dismounted. The boy, half-frightened, tried to break away, whereupon the white man spoke to him harshly.

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"Little fool, stand still. Now answer. Whose dog is that?"

"My father's, Inkosi."

"Go tell thy father he has one dog less to care for."

So saying, he drew his revolver and shot the dog.

As the youngster departed, wailing bitterly, the white man turned to his chief police boy.

"You see, Bomba, we must deal firmly with them. Thou knowest it is against the law for a dog to be abroad unleashed not wearing the registration badge. Doubtless the white man, Symes, has been altogether too soft with these people." And laughing as at a joke, Andrews, for that was his name, patted Bomba on the back.

In this, he revealed his ignorance of the native psychology, as in the shooting of the dog the smallness of his character had come to light. That he had spoken of another white man lightly to a native was a crime in itself in the eyes of both white and black. Further he was unduly friendly to the natives in his service, and unjustly harsh to all others.

Having entered the village, he directed a native to show him the way to the huts of the white man, "whom ye in your folly call Incubu."

Symes who had had word of his coming elected to meet the stranger in the hut he used as an office. He was sure that this man had come to succeed him and he could not bring himself to greet him before the villagers. His thoughts were full of the happy years he had spent with his people, and as his hands closed over two bound twigs that were on the desk before him, he smiled at the memory of the meeting which had terminated in close comradeship with Zari. His cogitations were interrupted by the harsh order—

"Halt."

Then a dark shadow blotted out the sunlight. Looking up, he saw Andrews, an official envelope in his hand.

"Are you Symes? Well, I was instructed to hand you this. Your work has not been up to par and I am now in charge of this district. However, you had better read the official notice."

With an arrogant, contemptuous air he handed over the missive. Slowly Symes broke the seal and opening the sheet read:

NATIVE DEPARTMENT,
BULAWAYO.

L. P. SYMES,
Native Commissioner,
Shashi District:

It has come to the notice of this department that a native of the Matabele tribe, one Zari by name, is pursuing the arts and rites of witchcraft; and that you, during the years in which you have been in charge of the district, have taken no steps to apprehend the man, but rather have been friendly with him to the extent of being present at certain of his (*sic*) wonder-workings.

In view of this, and your slackness in the gathering of taxes, it has been deemed advisable to transfer you to headquarters.

You will leave as soon as convenient after receipt of this notice.

Turn over all office equipment to Mr. Andrews who will take over the district. You are also expected to render him all the assistance within your power.

Yours truly,

(Signed)

So his friendship for Zari was the cause of his fall. Well, he would not have done otherwise. Still it was hard, and his heart ached for the welfare of his people. Was demotion his reward for the long years of faithful service in what was admittedly one of the hardest districts in the country? Did not Melefe, one of the last to swear allegiance after the bloody rebellion of 1896, live peacefully under the white man's rule?

His people had prospered—herds had increased; and from a people ruled by fear of sudden death, Symes by wise counsel and precept, had evolved a settled and ordered kingdom. The white man's laws were obeyed, the white man respected. And all this he had accomplished with the aid of Zari, the witch-doctor, on whose head would now doubtless be set a price.

Once again he read the letter, then:

"Well, Andrews. You know what this means, of course?"

"That you have failed? Yes. I am sorry, but it takes a strong man to handle these witch-doctors."

"Ah, yes, I suppose so."

It was characteristic of the man that he made no complaint of the injustice of the thing. It was an order: that was all sufficient.

For the next two days Symes was busy turning over his equipment to Andrews, explaining the bounds of the district and all the knowledge he had acquired of it. But when he came to offer suggestions

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as to the treatment of this or that village, or such and such a native, Andrews turned a deaf ear.

"I guess I know the native all right—haven't been in this country six years for nothing. They are all liars and treacherous. Call you friend one minute and ready to stab you in the back the next. Now take this head man, M'Cabe, whom you say will be able to make his village pay the full tax this year; that is probably a lie, and anyhow if the crops have failed I wager that it is because they are lazy or that they have paid a heavy tribute to this crafty devil—a friend of ours, isn't he—Zari."

Symes made no answer to this, realizing the manner of man he had to deal with. Nevertheless he did essay to put in a word for his friend.

"Why do you show such contempt for witch-doctors? I will admit that some of them resort to questionable tactics, but on the whole I have found them pretty fine men—Zari specially so."

"Faugh, the man has bewitched you with his stinking concoctions, and his ridiculous costume. I suppose that you will be telling me next that he has supernatural powers."

"No, I won't go so far as that. But I do say that he is in possession of nature's most artfully-treasured secrets, and it is my belief that he has strong hypnotic powers."

"Bosh, he performs a few tricks that would be laughed to scorn by any third-rate music-hall magician, and with these as stock in trade he works on the superstition of fools, so that they are ready to give him anything he asks for."

Symes, realizing the folly of discussing the subject further, let it drop. He recognized in the workings, sayings, and dress of Zari emblems just as symbolical as the robes of a Christian priest. Prescriptions, not roguery—prescriptions even as the Latin formulæ of the white man's doctor. Wisdom, not deceitful, high sounding words—wisdom even as the intricate sayings of a learned lawyer.

TWO days after Andrews' arrival, he and Symes went up together to Melefe's village, and there Symes bade farewell to the chief and his people.

"Melefe, and ye people of Melefe, tomorrow I leave thee. The Great White Lord in Bulawayo has need of me at the Big Village in Bulawayo, and I must go. This one, whom we call Andrews, will take my place. Hearken unto him, my children, for he is, even as I was, the mouthpiece of the Great White King."

As he sat murmurs of grief arose and Melefe answered, speaking for his people.

"Baba, thy words are as the fruit of the wild plum—bitter to us thy people. Since thou hast been with us, we have come to know, and knowing, love thee. That thou must depart is a thing of grief to us, for well we know that there can be none like unto thee. Yet because ye ask it of us we will do as this other, whom ye call Andrews, bids, and hearken unto his voice."

The next day Symes departed, heavy-hearted at leaving his beloved people, and the thought of the dull days of office routine and red tape that awaited him. He was accompanied to the edge of the district by Melefe and most of the counsellors. At the boundary they halted, presents were given and received, then wishing Symes "*Hamba gahle, Inkosi* (a soft way be thine, Chief)," they returned sadly to their huts.

That same morning Zari was holding a reception at a village some two hundred miles away, whither he had gone to preside at a Rain Dance.

Zari, dressed as he was, wearing the leopard skin which told of his power over animals, the necklace of snakes' fangs and human teeth, and the rest, the uninitiated would have been apt to agree with Andrews that here was but a trickster. But his face gave the lie to any such accusation. The hair—abnormally long for a native—was gray and thick, his cheeks hollow and sunken. It was the face of a very old man. Yet the forehead was that of a thinker, and the eyes keen and piercing, so that no man could gaze into them longer than the drawing of one short breath.

He was sitting outside the guest hut which was situated on the outskirts of the village. He seemed not to heed the people who sat before him waiting eagerly lest they might lose the slightest word that fell from the lips of this man of many wonders, but gazed over their heads toward the entrance of the village.

"I see," he said suddenly, "a man who labors in his gait as though he had run a great distance. The news that he bears is evil."

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Even as he spoke a man burst pantingly through the crowd.

"News," he cried. "I bring news."

The crowd all gathered 'round him, forgetting in their eagerness the man who had so strangely foretold the coming of the messenger. Zari's harsh voice quickly brought them to the remembrance of his presence.

"Speak less loudly, thou vulture—thou croaker of evil tidings."

"Pardon, oh, Great One. My eyes did not see thee, else would not my tongue so grievously have offended thy ears, oh, Giver of Life, Master of the Stars and Lord of Wisdom. Will the Great One pardon his dog, for of a truth the news I bear is great. But fool that I am, what need of me, for without doubt my tidings are already known to the Great One."

"Have done, have done," said Zari impatiently. "Am I an *intombi*, a young maiden, to be won by honeyed words? What bearest thou in thy hands? Two twigs that once were bound together? How read I this riddle? The one twig was Incubu the white man, the other the people of Melefe. Once they were as the bough to the tree, the foal to the mare. How read I this? Of a truth thou art a bearer of evil tidings. Listen, thou foolish ones. Incubu your friend, has gone to his own people, and another white man has come in his place. I mourn for ye, oh, ye people of Melefe, for he will deal hardly with thee." Then to the messenger, "Tell thou the rest, for I am weary."

With a gasp of astonishment the man did as he was bid.

"The Great One speaks truth. The sun has made his journey twice since Incubu bade farewell to us his people. That same night he bade me carry these two twigs to this wonder-maker."

He stopped, looking amazedly at Zari.

"Go on, fool, tell them what manner the stranger white man is."

"He is one who knoweth not the ways of our people. A hard man he is, brooking no interference. He promises to deal harshly with Melefe and all his people, saying that our Father Symes has dealt altogether too kindly with us. With him are many black Mashona police whom he intends to put in authority over us. Further he boasts—pardon, oh, Zari—he boasts, Great One, that he will take thee and put thee where thy magic will avail thee nought, saying that thy wonder-workings are forbidden by the laws of the white men. Further—once more pardon—that thou art but a trickster."

Only the most observant bystander would have noticed that over Zari's face there flickered an expression of contemptuous anger—no more. But for the others, they freely gave vent to their opinions, voicing at first doubt of the truth of the news, then exclaiming in anger at the man who dared to slander their Great One.

"Peace," said Zari. "It is nothing. Thou sayest our Father Symes has left us; what said he concerning this other?"

"That we were to do as he bids us, Great One, for he, too, is the mouthpiece of the Great White King."

"As Symes bid ye—that do. Now I go to meet this white man who scorns the gifts of the Great-Great."

Some days later, on his arrival at his abode near the village of Melefe, Zari found a messenger awaiting him—a man of the Mashona race, wearing the uniform of the native constabulary. Being a stranger he showed Zari none of the courtesy due to his age and rank.

"Old one, my master, the white man, would have speech with thee and bids thee wash before entering his presence."

Zari's eyes flashed with anger, albeit he answered meekly.

"Who am I, old dog that I am, that a white man should crave speech with me. Yet tell the white man that I will obey."

But it was not until the following day that Zari approached the door of Andrews' hut. The latter, seeing him, called to several of his followers, all Mashonas:

"See where comes Zari, the liar, the cheat. He claims to cause the rain to fall and the sun to shine. So old, they say, that his wisdom is even as the wisdom of ten wise men. Take notice now, how that his wisdom shall be as that of a child, for now, for the first time, he meets a man." Then to Zari: "How now, old one. I sent for thee yesterday. It is in my mind to beat thee."

"Pardon, Great Chief, but I am an old man, and needs must rest after the long journey; further, I would wash before entering thy presence—as thy messenger here bade me—and lo, the maidens had

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already gone to the waterhole. And indeed ye speak truth—never have I seen such a man as thee. Yet methinks thou doest me too much honor, when ye say that ye will beat me. Other men I have known, would order their black servants to do this deed."

"*Au-a tula.* Hold thy tongue, thou art over-bold. Now listen. It has come to my ears that thou art a witch-doctor. Thy sun, mark ye, has set. See to it that thou no longer practise any of the tricks of thy calling. If ye disobey—and my eyes are keen, my ears long—then will I cause thee to be taken and sent away to work, even to the Great Sea, and there ye shall try thy magic in stopping the water from eating the land. That is all, dog. Ye have my leave to go."

Andrews referred to the breakwater at Cape Town, to which all prisoners sentenced to long terms of hard labor are sent to work.

With a meek, "*Longile* (that is good)" Zari turned and walked slowly away. But Andrews called him back.

"Say you, how dost thou salute a white man?"

"*Shala gahle, Inkosi* (May your path be smooth, Chief)."

"Good. Do not so err again, lest I do thee the great honor, and beat thee."

DURING the ensuing weeks Andrews contrived to make himself cordially disliked by all the natives. Before taking over Symes' district he had seen service in Mashonaland. There his harsh and overhanded methods had met with success, for the Mashona is as water to milk compared to the Matabele. Always a cowardly race, they are ready to lick the boots of their white conquerors. The Matabele, on the other hand, are a warrior race, true offspring of the mighty Zulu. They have never been really conquered by the white man, and though they have submitted to the white man's rule of their own free will, they are quick to resent any usurpation of their rights.

Had Andrews been just harsh in his dealing with them, they would have thought nothing of it, but when he denied them the rights they had always enjoyed, murmurings arose. The fact that the Mashona police boys had been put in authority over them was a constant cause of friction. These natives, backed up by Andrews, insulted Melefe's people at every turn.

When the marriage-feast of Melefe's favorite daughter was being celebrated with much feasting, and chanting of songs praising the bride and bridegroom, Andrews sent one of his men bidding Melefe stop the noise, for "the white man wishes to sleep." He had still further aroused Melefe's anger in the matter of the wedding, by refusing to allow the bridegroom to pay Melefe more than four head of cattle as *Lobella*—the marriage-gift. This was tantamount to denying Melefe the chieftainship, for the law said that a chief might receive five head of cattle at the marriage of his daughter.

The petty tyrannies, such as the order that all men must remove their sandals on passing the huts of Andrews and his men, the heavy fines for trifling infringements of the law, the beatings without rime or reason—all this they would have overlooked, might even have admired him for them.

But he broke up a Rain Dance, beating the participants with a *sjambox*, calling them "fools" and worse—"that was the barking of a strange dog without the gates." Further, he always beat offenders himself, thus losing for good any claims he might have had to their respect, for at such times he lost control of his temper, and said many things that in his calmer moments he might have regretted.

The piccaninnies learned to fear him, as they had formerly loved Symes. They soon came to know that this white man carried no pretty trinkets and sweetmeats in his pockets for them, but that, on the contrary, he delighted to pinch them and twist their ears. The mothers frightened their children into disobedience, not with the tales of the crocodile—that eater of wicked children; he whose eyes say "Come,"—as was their wont—but with the threat to tell "Lo Monga," the Bad Man.

Though Melefe endeavored to keep the promise he had made to Symes that he would obey Andrews, he found it hard to do so, and still harder to keep his men from open rebellion. When some of the bolder ones urged that Andrews be killed, he answered—

"Not so, for this one, fool though he be, is yet the mouthpiece of the Great White

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Chief, and should we kill him, there will be a great reckoning—others will come in his place whose rule will be harder and much blood will be shed."

So, much troubled and full of doubt, the fires of rebellion did not break, though smoldering.

It came to pass also that Andrews was forced to live mainly on tinned food, for he was a poor hunter and the natives were reluctant to sell him any of their provisions, for should the fowl be tough or the eggs bad, a beating was in store for the unlucky vendor. And as the Matabele never eats eggs, and cares not what becomes of them, oftentimes a man will find among his purchases one that is many moons old.

Andrews' attempts at hunting were a complete failure. His own boys were poor trackers, and he failed to secure the services of any of the Matabele. During his first week in the district he shot many dogs because they were not wearing the registration badge as ordained by the Government. Now these badges were a form of tax, costing about twelve cents. It was also hoped by the imposition of this tax that the number of dogs would be automatically lessened, and thus reduce the very real danger of a rabies epidemic.

But the natives saw only the piece of brass and looked on it as an evil charm, and thus though many of them had paid the tax, they refused to fasten the badge on the dogs. This fact Symes had known and winked at, striving always to explain the meaning of the badge to his people. But Andrews, as always, obeyed the letter of the law, which read—

"If any dog shall be seen abroad and no registration badge be affixed to his collar, that dog shall be shot."

When, therefore, Andrews asked for spoorers, or guides to hunt with him, they refused to go, saying that their dogs were dead, and it was folly to hunt without dogs.

As for Zari, he too obeyed the letter of the law. Many natives came to him seeking counsel and aid as of yore.

Said one:

"Oh, Great One, my son is ill. Make the great magic, therefore, that he may once more be well."

"Nay," said Zari, "the white chief has forbidden me to do these things—and forsooth what else said he? They are but tricks."

"*Au-a*, Great One, what is this? My son will die?"

"Take thy son to the Great White Chief—he is greater than I."

Came another:

"O Zari, my third wife's brother claims cattle which are mine. Judge thou between us."

"Nay, it is a thing forbidden. Go thou to the white man."

Later came many from the outside villages.

"Oh, Zari, we have planted the corn, and nothing lacks but for thee to hold the rites of supplication to the Great Spirits, and our harvest will be great."

And as before he answered:

"Fools, ye know not what ye ask. Who am I that the Great Spirits should hearken unto my voice? Moreover, it is a thing forbidden."

"Oh, Zari," spake some, "this man, Lo Monga, knoweth not our ways. He attends the council of the chief, and always his Mashona curs are with him. Further they carry their spears and this ye know is against our law. Also he beats us without mercy."

"What is this to me? His ways are above thy ways; and as to the beatings, did not Symes beat thee?"

"In truth, yes, oh, Great One, but justly, and without anger. This one beats without reason."

Now it so happened that the season was a poor one, and the crops failed. There was also sickness among the cattle. Whether it was because the men, seeing that Zari would not bless their labors as of old, counted all labor wasted, and therefore did not work in the fields, or for reasons supernatural, the fact remains—the crops failed and the people were unable to pay their tax.

ONE M'CABE, that same man for whom Symes had pleaded with Andrews for leniency, was in the worst predicament. His crops had been totally destroyed by heavy rains, and his cattle had suffered heavily from the plague. When Andrews on his tour of collection reached this kraal, maddened by his failure to collect the full amount from the other kraals in his district, he was determined to make an example of M'Cabe. Calling all the people of the village before him he said:

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"It has come to my mind that ye people of M'Cabe, whose chief is Melefe, are a worthless and lazy people. Because ye did not labor in the fields, thy crops are poor; because ye neglected thy cattle the plague struck them. Ye have spent your time feasting, and in the making of beer. Answer me this, if your crops are poor, as ye say, how can you use grain for the making of beer? It comes to me to save you from this temptation."

Turning to his followers he ordered them to collect all the gourds holding beer, and bring them to the council-place. When this was done he commanded M'Cabe and his head men to pour the beer out on the ground. Now this in itself was an evil thing, for the beer, besides being a very necessary medicine, was essential to the social life of the people, and to the proper observance of the different festivals.

Once more Andrews addressed the people:

"Nor is this all. It is my order that every fifth man of ye receive fifty lashes, and that ye may more clearly remember the judgment of a white man, M'Cabe I take with me. He will be sent to the Great White Village, there to suffer the punishment of one who refuses to pay the tax."

Loud murmurs arose from the now angry people, but they were at once silenced when Andrews drew his revolver and said:

"What? Is there any that desires to take the long journey?"

That night, while handing Andrews a light for his pipe, Bomba, his chief boy, collapsed over the fire, a big *assegai* sticking through him. It was at once evident to Andrews—conscious of the hatred the natives bore toward him—that the *assegai* was meant for him. Ordering his police boys to keep close guard over the village, allowing none to leave, he bade them keep silent regarding the murder of Bomba.

That night was one of great anxiety to Andrews. The violent death of his servant had brought home to him, in unmistakable terms, the fact that he had totally failed in his administration of the district. He must be given credit inasmuch, that he, in treating the natives as he had done, was sincerely of the opinion that they were all lazy, liars, to be classed with the lowest animals. He had, through ignorance fostered by his supreme egotism, overlooked the fact that the Matabele are a proud race—to be treated with diplomacy.

He had accorded them a lower intelligence than is acceded to dogs, and acted on the old adage—"A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree; the more you beat them, the better they be." His experiences, of which this murder was but the crisis, forced upon him the conclusion that his methods were wrong. Knowing that his life was in danger he desired only to get out of the district, but first he would find and punish the murderer.

Next morning he commenced a rigid cross-examination of all the people in the village. Even the children were not excepted. Threats, blows, promises—all alike brought no results. His questions met with blank sullen silences, and he felt as though he were driving his head up against a stone wall.

As a last resort, feeling his own self-respect hinged on the discovery of the murderer, he listened to the suggestions of M'Cabe that he seek the assistance of none other than Zari. Openly scoffing, he sent one of his men for the witch-doctor. Four days later his messenger returned—Zari with him.

"Listen, Zari, ye call yourself the Master of the Spirits. That I do not believe, neither do I believe that thou art aught but a trickster."

"Hard words, white man; yet methinks that thou didst not send for me to tell me this. I smell blood, the blood of one who was once thy servant."

"Very pretty," mocked Andrews; "of course thou didst not discourse with my messenger on the way. Seek thy aid, fool? Nay, rather would I put thee to the test. Ye have been told that a servant of mine has been foully killed by one of these men of M'Cabe. Find thou the slayer and it is in my mind to let thee do as ye did in the days of Symes, but if ye fail then will I send thee to labor at the breakwater—even as I threatened thee some moons ago."

"Thou art hard on an old man, Inkosi, how should I succeed where thou hast failed? And of a truth though the reward is great, yet great also is the penalty. But Zari will do his best!"

He ordered all the people of the village to come before him, then, calling each by name, he bade the young men—there were but twenty, for the village was a small one—to come forward apart from the rest. As each young man stepped our from the rest of the people, Zari looked closely at him,

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muttering to himself the while. When they had all been called, Zari divested himself of his leopard skin, his necklace, and all his symbolical adornments, standing before them, naked save for a loin cloth. Then taking a baboon skin from his bag, he spread it on the ground before him. Over the people spread an awed silence, intensified by the far-off lowing of cattle, or the shrill yapping of dogs.

Finally the witch-doctor spoke, but his voice was faint as if he were far away. And of a truth it seemed as though he were conversing with the Great Spirits.

"Oh, ye Great Ones," said the thin and singularly sweet voice, "Inkoosikaas, listen to me, thy servant. As thou has ordained of old, I, thy supplicant, come before thee shorn of my powers. The leopard skin, and the necklace of life and death, have I laid in the dust before thee. Now behold me even as a little child. Grant me, I pray thee, one boon.

"An evil deed has been wrought in this, the village of M'Cabe. A man has been slain. Tell me, I pray thee, the name of the slayer that the murdered one's blood no longer need cry out for vengeance. Yet one more request. Lest our ears be deafened by the majesty of thy voice, enter thou into the skin of the baboon—and let it speak to me."

All watched Zari intently—even Andrews could not keep his eyes off the man he had pronounced a trickster—and it seemed to them that they could discern the shadowy figure of the Queen of the Heavens, hovering around Zari's head, and could hear her reply—

"Thy wish is granted, oh, faithful one."

Suddenly the stillness was broken by the harsh voice of Zari:

"What is it, fools? See ye aught? Hearken. The spirit Inkoosikaas, Queen of Heavens, hath deigned to enter the skin of the baboon. Now make clean a place for her in the chief guest hut."

When this was done, Zari placed the skin on the floor of the hut, then emerging, once more addressed the men.

"Tremble, guilty one, who art also a liar. Now well ye know that man can not lie with impunity to the spirits of the Great-Great. This then will ye do. One by one ye will enter the hut and place thy hand, thy left hand, mark ye, on the head of the baboon. Ye will let thy hand remain there the space of sixty heart-beats. If the murderer is among ye, the spirits of the Great-Great will cry out with a loud voice at the defilement."

Now all the young men trembled and would have refused to enter the hut had they so dared. For, mark you, even though innocent, it is no light thing to come so closely before the Queen of the Heavens! But there was no way out, and one by one they entered the darkened hut, remained for a short time, then once more faced Zari.

As the last man came from the hut a gasp of astonishment intermingled with relief, for the voice had not cried out.

"Fool," said Andrews, "thou hast failed, as I knew ye would."

"Perhaps ye are right, white man—yet wait."

And entering the hut Zari remained for some minutes, and those without could hear voices as though he were once again communing with the spirits. Once more he stood before them, and it was noted that the baboon skin was about his shoulders. For a space he gazed on the young men sternly. Suddenly he spoke:

"Oh, ye men, one of ye had it in his mind to do a more awful thing than we had dared think. The *assegai* was meant for the white man, and the spirits of the Great-Great, sickened at so evil a crime, could not cry out against that one. Not so easily, however, does the guilty one escape. On the hands of the slayer she made a mark that is known to me. Hold out your hands therefore in supplication to the spirits, that the terrible vengeance fall not upon ye—for ye are all liars that ye say 'we do not know who the man is'—striving thereby to shield him from the punishment that is his due."

They all held out their hands with a great cry of—

"Mercy, have mercy, oh, Great One."

Zari walked in front of them, examining closely their hands. Now and again he would stop and whisper, as though to the baboon skin. Twice he went up and down the line. Suddenly he stopped, and pointing at the man before him, said—

"Thou art the man, oh, son of M'Cabe."

The man dropped to his knees and groveled in the dust, saying:

"I confess. I desired to kill the white man who has so evilly dealt with us. He hath beaten us and sent our people away,

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as he would take my father, to labor. But this is not all; he hath trodden upon the traditions, and cast scorn upon us. Our Father Symes, he whom we called Incubu, dealt differently with us. Is it not so, ye people?"

From the crowd a mighty shout went up:

"Yea, oh, Zari, it is even as he says. Let us kill the white man, so that Symes may come back to us."

"Nay," said Zari, "that would be folly. This man hath shed blood, for that he must be punished. But it comes to my mind that the punishment will be light for the provocation was great. Also the white man will show thee mercy and will not send M'Cabe away from thee."

"All shall be even as Zari says," said Andrews. "Thy taxes are remitted, save only those of the slayer—he shall pay twofold."

That night Andrews held conference with Zari.

"It has come to my mind, oh, Zari, that I have been a fool. I am not fit to govern this people, and I will return to the Great White Kraal—even to Bulawayo. And I will supplicate the Great White Chief that he send Symes back to ye. Now tell me, I pray thee, how this wonder was worked."

"It is but a little thing, white man. Well I knew that the *assegai* was cast by a young man, for the blow was a strong one, therefore I did not question the old men. When the young men entered the hut, and no voice cried out, ye all thought that I had failed. That was but the beginning. Now I, knowing that the guilty one would not place his hand on the skin of the baboon—fearing the wrath of the spirits of the Great-Great—knowing this, I say, I had smeared the skin with a strong smelling ointment.

"When I said that the spirits had made a mark on the hand of the guilty one, it was only that I might the more closely examine their hands, and to get the smell of them. And lo! It was even as I had supposed. The hand of one man was free from the scent. That man I accused. The rest ye know. But do not despair, white man, thou art not altogether a fool. Thou art yet young and there is much to learn of men, and the ways of men; and it is in my mind that ye will learn them."

A MONTH later Symes' superior—that same man who had known him of old—came into the office where Symes was hard at work on statistics. He had in his hand an open letter, which he handed to Symes. Symes read it through, then through again. One paragraph stood out from the rest.

"I have the honor to request that I be transferred to headquarters, and venture to recommend that Symes be reappointed to this district, for the people love him, and will have none other."

"Would you like to go, Symes?"

Symes' face lighted up.

"What, back to my people, Chief. I would jump at the chance"

"Well, I will leave you now. I suppose you want to start packing right away. Come in and see me before you go. I have a present for Melefe."

Hardly had the department head left the room when a native runner entered. Symes recognized him as one of Melefe's young men. In his hand, which he held out to Symes, he held two twigs bound tightly together.

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THE CAMP-FIRE

A MEETING-PLACE FOR READERS, WRITERS AND ADVENTURERS

E. E. HARRIMAN writes of a curious coincidence in connection with his story in this issue:

Los Angeles.

I have a neighbor from Arizona, a sick man who came here to recover. Lives next door. I call on him now and then and one night I told him about Pap Gleason in my yarn and he laughed. Then he asked if I knew Pap Gleason of Arizona. I told him that the name just popped into my head and I had no idea that there ever was a rancher there of that name.

'Why, man," he said, "old Pap Gleason is one of my dearest friends and he fits your description to a T."

Funny, eh? Then he told me Pap Gleason had been ranching out there for forty years and is a well known character in the State.—E. E. H.

DO YOU remember the little discussion we had about the old whaler *Morning Star?* Here's the latest chapter in her sixty-five years of adventure—a news item from the New York *Sun* last Summer sent us by L. H. Haight who has given us news of her before:

A marine specimen of unusual interest has been added to the collection in the harbor. This is the former New Bedford whaleship *Morning Star*, which after a service of sixty-four years in the whaling fleet has been drawn by the war into the business of cargo carrying.

THE *Morning Star* is said to be the first of the whaleships to enter the cargo trade and she is thought to be the oldest vessel in point of years in New York harbor at the present time.

This vessel was examined by interested visitors recently at Brady's wharf, Staten Island. Outside of her square-shouldered, stanch appearance she does not resemble very much the old ship that for so many years put out past Gay Head on long whaling voyages.

LIKE many of the old whalers the *Morning Star* was bark-rigged. For present purpose she has been cut down to a fore-and-aft rig. All the old yards are gone, the topmasts unstepped and she is now a three-masted schooner as far as sail plan is concerned, with her original lower masts still in use.

Further to change the appearance of the ancient craft those heavy davits, which used to hold her boats always swung out, have been removed. Also that high, strange deckhouse aft, typical of all old whaleships, has been cut down to a more practical cabin. An auxiliary engine of sixty horse-power has been put in to help her along on windless days.

BUILT by skilled Dartmouth shipwrights of hardy oak, the *Morning Star* joined the whaling fleet in 1853. A vessel of 238 tons, 104 feet long, she was somewhat smaller than other famous whaleships. But for long years she successfully breasted the storms of the seven seas and brought her owners several fortunes in oil.

There is only one older vessel in the whaling fleet still in service. This is the *Charles W. Morgan*, built in 1841, which recently sailed from New Bedford on a whaling cruise.

IN A letter to me concerning his story in this number, L. Patrick Greene writes: "In the character of *Zari* I have tried to refute the unjust, at least to my mind, characterization of witch-doctors by Stewart Edward White in his Kingozi stories."

FROM one of our comrades, writers' brigade, at the battle-front in France, Charles Brown, Jr.:

In a Y. M. C. A. Hut,
Twelve Miles Behind the Lines,
France of the Bleeding Heart.

I am "in repose" with our French division, which has dragged itself out of the trenches for a short breathing spell. But strange to say, I do not care about being in repose. There's no adventure in this repose life.

COMEDY there is, however. For instance, the local "cinema." The picture-house is across the river. Before the war the city council met in it the first and third Tuesday of each month. Always the house is crowded. For the most part French soldiers attend. Last night it seemed that practically every poilu in the town was there. You could have cut the smoke and trench-stench into huge chunks. It was the most tangible stuff I had run into in weeks. And dialogue! The place flowed with it.

Most all of the soldiers brought their canteens of Penard (red wine) with them. Also, tin-cups were in evidence. The trench-weary poilus were not contented to sit in their seats and dispose of the red goods. Instead, they insisted on sitting on the backs of the long benches. Some of them were so "zigzag" (intoxicated, if you please) that they rolled off of the bench backs into the laps of their comrades. And the comrades reciprocated by shampooing the "zigzag" ones with Penard.

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WELL, after thirty minutes of this "Keystone" stuff the show began. The title of the picture was "The Banker's Crime." I saw one reel and a half of the thrilliest thriller I ever gave both eyes to. It moved as rapidly as a German "Zep." In all probability I would have seen more of it, but the picture ceased to move.

"The —— machine has broken down," I said to Flitcroft E. Evans of Brooklyn.

"Then the grand performance is *fini*," Evans spoke up. And never did Evans speak more wisely. For, forty-five minutes later, the operator emerged from his little shack at the end of the council room. His face was flushed and he clung desperately to the stair railing. He put one foot before the other very slowly. At any moment I expected him to fall and roll to the bottom of the stairs. At once I realized why he had kept us waiting by turning the lights on and off, as operators have a way of doing. He was "zigzag"—not partly but totally "zigzag." In short, he was incapacitated for work that night.

I HAVE not yet been successful in mailing my "war" letters to you. Censorship is the stumbling-block. However, you'll get them sooner or later.

Write me a few lines, *bon comrades*. They will be appreciated on this side of the water.

In a few days I am going back to the lines. We may make a three-day auto trip across France before we return to our work.—CHARLES BROWN, JR.

"UNCLE FRANK" is Frank H. Huston of almost anywhere outdoors in California, whose inquiry some time ago started us collecting information on the pioneers of the Old West. I dare say many a future investigator or historian will refer to the back pages of our Camp-Fire to get data he can find nowhere else. The men who know are among our number and our work in gathering this knowledge before it is lost forever is not only interesting but a very valuable service.

"Uncle Frank" is a pioneer himself and if only we can persuade him to tell us some of his own adventures among the Indians we'll get some particularly good hearing. Let's put it up to him now. He started all this discussion and it's only fair that he should contribute his own share.

THE first name omitted in his letter is that of a prominent man, whom we spare through politeness; the second is *not* that of one of our own writers. The story he votes for is "The Secret Wolf," by S. Carleton, back in 1916. The "E. E." referred to is our comrade E. E. Harriman of Los Angeles, an "Ask Adventure" editor and one of our most enthusiastic Camp-Fire members; "Uncle Frank" has christened him, himself and me the "H Triangle," and we do quite a bit of talking among ourselves. I have to do mine by letter only, but, as a result of our three-cornered correspondence, the two other points of the triangle have hunted each other up personally and become good friends at first-hand. And some day, so help me, I'm going to get out there somehow and try to make good in the flesh as the third point of a triangle that exemplifies the real friendships that are more and more growing out of our meetings at the Camp-Fire.

And *will* you tell Camp-Fire that "Uncle Frank" says any one who will use an automatic shotgun or rifle a-hunting game is a black and white, bushy-tailed, odoriferous —— ——, or, to be exact, *Mephitis amcus*. Hoh, hah! now you know how to get the old man's goat—auto-guns, auto-wheels to hunt with. I can't swear; words fail me; can't even sputter.

WILL you tell Hugh Pendexter that he is the only writer I've seen who seems to really know anything about the Plains Injuns. Where did he get it, and how does he know about the ceremonial buffalo hunt? Yet ninety-nine readers out of ten wouldn't appreciate him (on that point, I mean). If they were all as correct in detail as he—or is he another B. M. Bower to fool me?—then we'd have some writers.

When I see more every issue *re* old-time West I feel like the man whose wife had triplets. "Gawd! did I do that?" Just my harmless little inquiry and what a wealth of information!

God labored six days and rested on the seventh. E. E. works six days and on the seventh goes to Catalina and repairs his house, so he tells me, and I tell him that house is like my britches.

I'M SITTING out back of the hogan before an Injun fire and writing by lantern-light—cold as it was in the snow-country, but that's the desert in Winter always. I just wish I had you and "Big Bill" (E. E.) opposite. There's a gallon of coffee on right now and half will be in me before I turn in—good old bootleg coffee—hat full of water, leg of your boot and a plug of tobacco b'iled together. Um, say Mister! that and the 44 cal. Win. and Colt won the West, naught else.

If you happen to be Mr. Benedict, tell Mrs. to mash fine some sweet potatoes and mix in the flapjack—"Cho-Noa (?) the griddle-cake" batter, and wear a golden halo.

Oh, —— ——, situated in a school for "writers" on the Hudson, makes a man just prior to the Battle of New Orleans pull a *revolver* on Gen. Jackson! . . . Finis! But then in "Julius Cæsar" Bill Shak. makes one character say "The clock strikes," so —— is in good company.

My vote: another gory but good tale from that woman who went to France, the one who was skeered to show up at the camp-fire because she wore skirts, and took her chance underground to kill 'em after smelling 'em up with wolf-bait. *No obstante* the buckets of blood, she can write, and not amateurish "eyethur."—"UNCLE FRANK."

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I ASKED Kathrene and Robert Pinkerton about the curious disease that figures in their story in this issue because I thought that those of you who, like myself, were not familiar with it might think it a fantastic invention of the authors instead of a medical fact. Also, Indian conjury is interesting and the following letters from the authors make good reading:

We first encountered a case of this kind in the fall of 1916, at a Hudson's Bay Company post. An Indian woman had started to turn white, patches of white skin showing on her face, neck and breast. The next year we saw her again, and her entire face was white. The manager of the post told us he had seen the same disease twice before in other parts of Canada.

WHILE we were talking of it Mrs. Pinkerton found an article in a magazine describing it. She gave it to a sister of the Indian woman and we forgot about it. At your suggestion we looked it up and find that Stelwagon describes it something as follows:

"Vitiligo, sometimes called leukoderma, a disease involving the pigment of the skin alone, characterized by the development of several round or oval, circumscribed, smooth, milk-white patches, tending to increase in size, and exhibiting at their margin increased pigmentation.

"VITILIGO and leukoderma are synonymous and interchangeable terms, although some authors use the former for the acquired disease and the latter for the congenital, patchy loss of pigment.

"The malady may be extremely slight, only a few spots presenting, or they may be numerous and, exceptionally, may gradually invade the entire surface, as in instances observed by Levi, Hall, Hardaway, Simon and myself."

Stelwagon goes on to say that some negroes have turned entirely white and that at no time in the course of the disease is the general health impaired, the malady having no damaging influence.—R. E. P.

Morrison, Colorado.

Conjuring and the fear of conjuring plays a large part in the lives of all Indians, even the Christianized ones. We did not realize how large a part it played until this Summer. Of course, it is not logical for a Christianized Indian to fear conjury, but then nothing that they do is logical. I will quote a few instances.

AN OLD man, the son of a former Scotch manager and an Indian woman, is really the leader in the church and in the absence of the priest reads the prayers on Sunday. Yet when he was hunting with his son and they caught a beaver in hunting territory that belonged to another Indian, he told his son to hide the beaver lest the Indian would find out about it and conjure them. You see, he was sufficiently a white man to dare to take the beaver but enough of an Indian to fear being conjured.

A full-blood Indian woman, the wife of a former manager of the post, became, during her years at the post, most Christianized and adopted many of the white woman's methods, including having her breakfast served in bed and demanding two maids. When her son went to the war she consulted the priest and asked for his prayers. At the same time she had an Indian, who is supposed to have some influence with the spirits, make her some medicine which would protect her son from the white man's bullets. You see she played safe and tried both methods. When she is sick she has both the doctor and the medicine-man.

EVEN a better instance is the story of a woman who was at the post this Summer. Her father had grown jealous of another Indian who had caught a silver fox and killed him. After he recovered from his jealous rage he concluded that the Indian who had caught the fox must have conjured him into a *weetigo*, a cannibalistic evil spirit. He did not want to become one, but he thought his own desires had no weight against this conjury. He concluded that he had better die than become this fearful thing and he asked his children to kill him while he was asleep. His sons refused to do it, but his daughter, thinking that she was doing the right thing, cut off his head with an ax while he slept.

Samuel Hearne tells a better instance. After one of his expeditions, wishing to gain favor with one of the Indians he gave him a paper and told him that that paper would conjure one of the Indian's enemies. The enemy heard about this and became so frightened that he did die. Samuel Hearne in telling of it admits that he was really responsible for the Indian's death, but insists that he had never imagined such an outcome to the trick.

—KATHRENE GEDNEY PINKERTON.

FOLLOWING the idea of giving, for those of you who don't happen to know, a few facts about the actual home of our magazine, here are a few items that will make us easier to find next time you're in New York.

Adventure lives a long quarter of a mile south of Washington Square, Macdougal Street, being, under another name, the western boundary of the Square, and the Square marking the lower or southern end of Fifth Avenue. Extending west and southwest from Washington Square is Greenwich Village—pronounced "Grennich" and famous as the habitat of human beings who devote nearly all their time to being "bohemians." No two people, including themselves, agree as to just what a bohemian is, but the New York ones rather specialize on living in Greenwich Village, which, incidentally, bears no resemblance to a real village.

IF YOU want to stop off there and eat at the Dutch Oven, or Polly's, or the Purple Pup, or elsewhere, and see the natives and the ordinary humans who also eat at these places, all right. I generally eat lunch there

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myself, but I rise to remark that I don't live in the village.

The village fades away into an Italian quarter just south of the Square. The only English names I can remember offhand on Macdougal Street between the Square and our building are the Dutch Oven and the National Noodle Company, the latter having disappeared of late. Southern Italians and, I think, Sicilians. Shops and tenements both sides all the way; hundreds of children in the street. Once it was the aristocratic quarter; the park gates of Aaron Burr's estate used to be right across the street from where our office is now.

ADVENTURE lives in the Butterick Building, which rises up, white, above the surrounding buildings, fifteen stories. Three women's magazines live there besides *Adventure* and *Everybody's—Delineator, Designer* and *Woman's*. Twelfth floor. A big reception-room that makes us all feel poor when we go home. *Adventure* is down the hall in a big room with four men, their desks and other desks and tables, and quite a few souvenirs around the walls.

The windows face the east, toward lower Broadway and, a mile and a half farther, the East River, the bridges, Brooklyn and Long Island. Look down quite a few stories and see wagons and trucks kept on top of roofs five or six stories from the ground. Also the men and boys with poles flying pigeons from numerous roofs.

FROM the west windows, on *Everybody's* side, you can see the North River half a mile away, here about a mile wide, but partly filled with long docks up and down each side. Also, across the river, at Hoboken, several of the German liners the United States took over, or maybe they're gone now—I won't say which, though, of course, such facts can't really be kept secret. If you're lucky, maybe there'll be a camouflaged steamer just coming in, painted like a nightmare or a rainbow but not easy to see.

From the building's south windows, lower New York, for a mile and a half beyond, the Singer tower and most of the famous skyscrapers—a wonderful fairyland of lights in the early evening. Beyond, the Upper Bay, Statue of Liberty and Staten Island.

From the north windows the Metropolitan tower, over a mile away, the *Times* tower farther still and all the rest of Manhattan for a dozen miles and more—buildings and streets, bricks, stones, asphalt, steel—and noise, a humming, thrumming, vibrating noise that rises and falls but never ceases day or night, year in and year out.

THE aerial trail in his story in this issue, Robert J. Pearsall writes, has its replica in fact:

San Francisco.

Many a time I've seen the *tuba* men of southern Luzon—the most agile humans in the world, I think—running across those teetery bridges from bamboo top to bamboo top. Sometimes they use only a single pole, with not even a handrail to cling to. They splice hollow pieces of cane, called *songas*, into the bottoms of the flower-clusters; and the sap they obtain, when fermented, forms *tuba*, next to *vino* the principal drink of the Islands.—ROBERT J. PEARSALL.

IT'S long since we've had word from Donald Francis McGrew, whose stories the old-timers will remember. I knew he had volunteered with a Maine regiment and was in France, a commissioned officer, but had no direct word from him for some time. Yes, France is different from the Philippines:

France, January 12, 1918.

This is a great show, with distinct features quite unlike previous affairs. If I have luck with me, I'll have great material when I return. As it is now, I am forbidden to write stories for publication; and, besides, I have no time to write.

I have heard a great deal of talk about the idea of the Boche which seems to be prevalent at home—that is, that the Boche yells "*Kamarad*" P. D. Q. You can tell the boys that this is not true of Mr. Boche as a nation. He fights like ——. He's a dirty, treacherous, stinking fighter, but he can fight like forty whirlwinds and he does. . . . It's a tough job and a rough one. At least that's what we think over here. . . . One thing in closing—the *men are splendid*. If the drafted men are *half* as good as these volunteers, we'll trim Germany this year or next. *Voilà!*—MAC.

IT IS seldom that a woman joins our writers' brigade and so follows Camp-Fire custom by standing up and introducing herself on the occasion of her first story in our magazine, but we always have special welcome for them. And those who have thus joined us have proved to be good fellows. Gentlemen, Ruby Erwin Livingston of Arkansas:

The friendly glow of the Camp-Fire attracts me, yet I much prefer to remain in its shadow rather than in the light, for I am merely myself. My adventures have been only near-adventures; nothing startling or thrilling ever quite happened. Was on a Mississippi steamboat once when the deck

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hands mutinied and some of them got shot while making for the tall timber at a landing, but I slept peacefully through it all and had to hear about it next day. I've also had the experience of sinking in water the third time and mentally witnessing a speedy motion-picture of my life—but some one grabbed me.

But these and other instances where something "nearly happened" have served at least to keep life from being monotonous, and I've traveled enough to know and be interested in all kinds of people—good, bad and indifferent. I first broke into print with bits of verse, about seven years ago, but had no idea that I should continue to follow this alluring will-o'-the-wisp, the writing-game.

WITH regard to "The Luck of Forty-Four" let me say that the main incident of the story really happened. The negro, nicknamed Forty-Four, voluntarily made the daring attempt to row through the overflow, capsized, and nearly died of exposure, but would not rest until his errand had been attended to. As a reward, he was pardoned, but I preferred to change the ending a bit, as you will see. One coincidence is that, after I had written the story I chanced to have a talk with a warden of Forty-Four's camp and found that I had drawn characteristics, age and physique, all true to life.—R. E. L.

HARRY MOORE, now collaborating with our old comrade George L. Catton, rises and introduces himself, following our Camp-Fire custom, on the occasion of his first story with us:

Born in Renfrew, Canada, in October, 1882. Apprenticed to the printing trade in 1896. Have worked as printer, foreman, reporter, editor of weekly and semi-weekly papers all over Ontario. Also worked in lumber mills in Ontario and Quebec. Began the writing game as a lyric writer for a Toronto publisher. Got lots of experience but no cash. Have been writing short stories and articles for magazines. Have soldiered a little; am fond of hunting and fishing. Have two brothers in France, with Canadians, and am proud of them. Have always been identified with sport—played lacrosse for years. Interested in baseball, horse-racing, prize-fighting or anything that shows action. Have been publishing papers for myself for thirteen years. Married, no family.—HARRY MOORE.

IT LOOKS as if our magazine might possibly have acquired supernatural powers of prophecy, or maybe it's a few of our authors who have this gift. Anyhow some of our stories show that their writers knew all about certain actual happenings long before they happened.

For example there was David L. MacKaye's story, "Brothers in Arms," in our issue of October, 1916, in which an officer made a private salute him forty times by way of teaching him military etiquette. Only the officer forgot that the regulations provide that an officer must return a salute, so his superior made said officer stand up in front of said buck private and salute *him* forty times. Well, nearly a year after this story appeared in our magazine that very incident happened. Yep. Up at Plattsburg. Lots of the newspapers told about it. Only they raised it ten, from forty to fifty, truth being stranger than fiction.

Odd, isn't it? Maybe some officer read the story, stowed the idea away in his mind, laid for a chance to soak it to some other officer and finally got his opportunity. Maybe it just happened. Maybe Mr. MacKaye was a prophet. Maybe some conscientious newspaper man, knowing how often the papers turn truth into fiction, felt he ought to even things up by turning fiction into truth. Maybe the newspaper man was working on space rates.

THE other day one of us, R. S. Arthur of Greenville, Pa., sent me an article of nearly two columns from the Pittsburgh —— of December 31, 1917, bearing this head: "Pittsburgh Border Guard Tells of Tragic Results from Disobeying Orders: National Army Man Gives Story of Treachery at Night at Eagle Pass; Pretty Girl Decoy." The article tells how the same thing that happened to Sentry, Post No. 4, in Edwin C. Dickenson's story, "To Quit My Post," in our issue of December 18th, has really happened to a sentry at Eagle Pass on the Mexican border. The article says the teller of the story is ——, 41st Infantry, F Company, U. S. A., home on furlough, and gives his home address and the name of the man he used to work for, and prints his picture, too. It gives his name, of course, but I omit it because I'm sure he wouldn't like any more fame than he's got already. Also the name of the newspaper, for it was probably what you'd call an unconscious medium.

MR. DICKENSON'S story, says ——, happened to Private Dickson, Post No. 10. The number of the post was different and, no name being used for the hero of our story other than No. 4, of course we don't know whether the names of the two men were the same or not, but strangely enough the name of the real man is very much like that of the author of our story. And there are lots and lots of other

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similarities between our story and what —— —— tells about happening to Dickson. The plot is just the same in both cases, and Mr. Dickenson was so good a prophet that he could tell in advance not only just what was going to happen later in real life but also just what a lot of the words and phrases were going to be when —— —— told the newspaper about it. Some prophet, I call him.

Of course it may all be coincidence, but it seems more probable that Mr. Dickenson is gifted with second sight.

THE chronology of events is interesting, too. We bought the story June 7, 1917, so Mr. Dickenson wrote it no later than May, 1917, maybe considerably earlier. It was published in our Mid-December issue, out November 18, 1917. The —— printed their record of fact December 31, 1917, stating that —— —— had told it "recently." He says it happened when F Company of the 41st was stationed on the Mexican border. I don't know just when that was, but I'll bet anything that some of you belong to the 41st, very possibly to F Company, and I'm sure all the rest of us would like to hear about this remarkable occurrence from those who were on hand at the time. Write in, comrades. Tell us the date and everything—or as nearly everything as seems wise.

I've asked Mr. Dickenson about it, too, and you'll find a word from him below.

Another odd thing is the name of the "enchantress" in the newspaper story. In our story it was Nita, but —— —— says the lady who "had a date" with the sentries was Data. I wish I knew whether the newspaper man's face grinned or failed to wake up when that name was handed to him.

Hartford, Conn.,
January 7, 1918.

Concerning the origin of my story "To Quit My Post," I would say that the situation that has arisen is certainly a remarkable one. The only facts which I had when I wrote this story, which by the way, was in March, 1917, are as follows:

THERE was a certain Mexican girl, of perhaps thirteen or fourteen, at Arivaca, Arizona, (where my troop was stationed during the late border trouble) whose father had been killed by American soldiers many years before, on the ground that he, having been engaged to assist them in some earlier border affair, had turned traitor and attempted to betray them to fellow Mexicans. This girl once made the statement to one of our troopers that some day she would even things up by killing one of us. Let me set your fears at rest by stating at this time that she never did.

This incident, together with an impression that I got one night when I was sergeant of the guard and had just posted a young near-millionaire at Post No. 4, the street described in the story, went to make the foundation of the tale. The incident at the ford was entirely fictitious, only brought in in order to give strength to my hero in resisting temptation. Or, at least to show that the habit of discipline had so thoroughly seized him that he could not escape it.

I NEVER heard the story described in the Pittsburgh paper and I must say I very much doubt if its author in that paper ever did, until he read it in *Adventure*, as it appears to have been copied more or less literally.

I think, under Mr. Hoffman's ruling in the matter, we are to be "congratulated."

I might add that the situs of the story is taken bodily from Arivaca, Arizona, where you will find the street, hotel, ford and cottonwoods, exactly as I have described them.—EDWIN C. DICKENSON.

I WISH that there were space to reprint the responses to "You and Democracy." The spirit and desire of them would make even the discouraged realize that, despite all our faults and weaknesses and sins, there is still in America a leaven of real Americanism and real democracy that can save her from the internal dangers that threaten. But work is needed in addition—systematic, organized work aimed at a definite goal, and that is why the American League for Citizenship has been incorporated. It will move slowly until it is ready and full prepared to move faster, but it is moving all the time.

One of the responses came from Goodwin Lee, editor of the *Fire Engineer*. He, too, had seen the need, and, he has been doing his bit for better American citizenship. I want you to read this from one of his editorials:

> You must remember that this is our Government, each man is individually responsible, each man is individually benefited, and, being a part of the Government, he must be prepared at all times, in all ways, to defend the thing he has helped to create.
>
> No privilege without responsibility.
>
> No responsibility without power.
>
> No power without a full knowledge of the meaning of privilege and responsibility.
>
> No Government without the realizing sense of each right citizen of privilege, responsibility and power, and—there you are.

That is good food for all of us to chew on. Our stomachs have not been nourished by enough of it.

ARTHUR SULLIVANT HOFFMAN.

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ADVENTURE'S FREE SERVICES AND ADDRESSES

These services of *Adventure* are free to *any one.* They involve much time, work and expense on our part, but we offer them gladly and ask in return only that you *read and observe the simple rules,* thus saving needless delay and trouble for you and us. The whole spirit of this magazine is one of friendliness. No formality between editors and readers. Whenever we *can* help you we're ready and willing to try.

Identification Cards

Free to any reader. Just send us (1) your name and address, (2) name and address of party to be notified, (3) a stamped and self-addressed return envelope.

Each card bears this inscription, each printed in English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Dutch, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Japanese:

"In case of death or serious emergency to bearer, address serial number of this card, care of *Adventure,* New York, stating full particulars, and friends will be notified."

In our office, under each serial number, will be registered the name of bearer and of one friend, with permanent address of each. No name appears on the card. Letters will be forwarded to friend, unopened by us. Names and addresses treated as confidential. We assume no other obligations. Cards not for business identification. Cards furnished free, *provided stamped and addressed envelope accompanies application.* We reserve the right to use our own discretion in all matters pertaining to these cards.

Later we may furnish a metal card or tag. If interested in metal cards, say so on a *post-card—not* in a letter. No obligation entailed. These post-cards, filed, will guide us as to demand and number needed.

A moment's thought will show the value of this system of card-identification for any one, whether in civilization or out of it. Remember to furnish stamped and addressed envelope and to *give in full the names and addresses of self and friend or friends when applying.*

Back Issues of *Adventure*

Will sell: Nov., Dec., 1910; All of 1911, 1912, 1916, 1917—15 cents per copy, prepaid in U. S. A. Postage stamps accepted—H. H. NORTHRUP, L. Box 29, North Freedom, Wisconsin.

Will sell: Jan, 1911, to May, 1916, inclusive, at 15 cents per copy. November, 1916, to date at 10 cents. Or $10.50 for the lot.—HARRY A. CLARIDGE, Nilton, Ontario, Canada.

Manuscripts

Glad to look at any manuscript. We have no "regular staff" of writers. A welcome for new writers. *It is not necessary to write asking to submit your work.*

When submitting a manuscript, if you write a letter concerning it, enclose it *with* the manuscript; do *not* send it under separate cover. Enclose stamped and addressed envelope for return. All manuscripts should be typewritten double-spaced, with wide margins, not rolled, name and address on first page. We assume no risk for manuscripts or illustrations submitted, but use all due care while they are in our hands. Payment on acceptance.

We want only clean stories. Sex, morbid, "problem," psychological and supernatural stories barred. Use almost no fact-articles. Can not furnish or suggest collaborators. Use fiction of almost any length; under 3000 welcomed.

Mail Address and Forwarding Service

This office, assuming no responsibility, will be glad to act as a forwarding address for its readers or to hold mail till called for, provided necessary postage is supplied.

General Questions from Readers

In addition to our free service department "Ask Adventure" on the pages following, *Adventure* can sometimes answer other questions within our general field. When it can, it will. Expeditions and employment excepted.

Remember

Magazines are made up ahead of time. An item received today is too late for the current issue; allow for two or three months between sending and publication.

Letter-Friends Back Home

A Free Service Department for American, Canadian, and Other Allied Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Others in Camp or at the Front.

Any one in the United States or Allied service who wishes to brighten the time with letters from "back home" or wherever else this magazine circulates, and with the personal touch and interest of hitherto unknown friends, can secure these letters and these friends by sending us his name and military address to be published once in this department as soon as censorship of soldiers' foreign addresses permits. In the meantime his address can be printed as "care *Adventure,*" letters to be forwarded at once by us to the military address he gives us in confidence. Among our readers of both sexes, all classes and from all parts of the world, he is likely to gain a number of friendly, personal correspondents. He is free to answer only such as he is comfortably able to answer under the conditions that surround him, and it is even suggested that the number of correspondents for any one man be determined by the needs of his comrades as well as by his own.

This magazine, of course, assumes no responsibility other than the publishing of these names and addresses as its space will permit. Experience has shown that the service offered is a very real and needed one, and all not themselves in service are asked to do their part in making the daily life of those fighting in our defense brighter and pleasanter through personal friendships across the intervening miles and by whatever personal, human kindnesses such friendships may suggest.

When giving your military address make it as permanent a one as possible.

(As the magazine is made up several months in advance, the above notice will appear with only such stray names as happen to come in to us until there has been time for it to reach the camps and the front and for names and addresses to reach us, be put in type and then reach our readers on publication.)

PRIVATE TOM CHRISTY, care of *Adventure.*

SAPPER LANCE-CORPORAL J. A. STUART, Reg. No. 320896; SAPPER S. HADDRELL, Reg. No. 291222; SAPPER J. BELL, Reg. No. 293023; SAPPER O. L. KAY, Reg. No. 293763; SAPPER A. J. SMITH, Reg. No. 320897; CORPORAL W. SMITH, W. R., Reg. No. 305457; PIONEER T. GIGG, Reg. No. 287265; PIONEER W. STEVENSON, Reg. No. 294738; SAPPER R. MCMILLAN, Reg. No. 318519—all of No. 2 works, Co. 2. W. and D. R. E., Salt Pans, Sandwitch Kent, England.

Missing Friends or Relatives

Our free service department "Lost Trails" in the pages following, though frequently used in cases where detective agencies, newspapers, and all other methods have failed, or for finding people long since dead, has located one out of about every five inquired for. Except in case of relatives, inquiries from one sex to the other are barred.

Expeditions and Employment

While we should like to be of aid in these matters, experience has shown that it is not practicable.

Addresses

Order of the Restless—Organizing to unite for fellowship all who feel the wanderlust. First suggested in this magazine, though having no connection with it aside from our friendly interest. Address WAYNE EBERLY, 731 Guardian Bldg., Cleveland, O., in charge of preliminary organizing.

Camp-Fire—Any one belongs who wishes to.

High-School Volunteers of the U. S.—An organization promoting a democratic system of military training in American high schools. Address *Everybody's,* Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City.

Rifle Clubs—Address Nat. Rifle Ass'n of America, 1108 Woodward Bldg., Washington, D. C.

(*See also under "Standing Information" in "Ask Adventure."*)

Ask Adventure

A Free Question and Answer Service Bureau of Information on Outdoor Life and Activities Everywhere and Upon the Various Commodities Required Therein. Conducted for Adventure Magazine by our Staff of Experts.

QUESTIONS should be sent, not to this office, but direct to the expert in charge of the department in whose field it falls. So that service may be as prompt as possible, he will answer you by mail direct. But he will also send to us a copy of each question and answer, and from these we shall select those of most general interest and publish them each month in this department, thus making it itself an exceedingly valuable and standing source of practical information. Unless otherwise requested, inquirer's name and town are printed with question; street numbers not given.

When you ask for *general* information on a given district or subject the expert will probably give you some valuable general pointers and refer you to books or to local or special sources of information.

Our experts will in all cases answer to the best of their ability, using their own discretion in all matters pertaining to their departments subject only to our general rules for "Ask Adventure," but neither they nor the magazine assumes any responsibility beyond the moral one of trying to do the best that is possible. These experts have been chosen by us not only for their knowledge and experience but for their integrity and reliability. We have emphatically assured each of them that his advice or information is not to be affected in any way by whether a given commodity is or is not advertised in this magazine.

1. **Service free to anybody, provided stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed.**
2. **Send each question direct to the expert in charge of the particular department whose field covers it. Do NOT send questions to this magazine.**
3. **No reply will be made to requests for partners, for financial backing, or for chances to join expeditions. "Ask Adventure" covers business and work opportunities, but only if they are outdoor activities, and only in the way of general data and advice. It is in no sense an employment bureau.**
4. **Make your questions definite and specific. State exactly your wants, qualifications and intentions. Explain your case sufficiently to guide the expert you question.**
5. **Send no question until you have read very carefully the exact ground covered by the particular expert in whose department it seems to belong.**

1. Islands and Coasts
CAPTAIN A. E. DINGLE, care Authors' League of America, Aeolian Hall, New York. Islands of Indian and Atlantic oceans; the Mediterranean; Cape Horn and Magellan Straits. Also temporarily covering South American coast from Valparaiso south around the Cape and up to the River Plate. Ports, trade, peoples, travel.

2. The Sea Part 1
J. P. TUCKER, Hotel Lansdale, 1410 Minor Ave., Seattle, Wash. Covering ships, seamen and shipping; nautical history, seamanship, navigation, yachting; commercial fisheries of North America; marine bibliography of U. S. and British Empire; seafaring on fishing-vessels of the North Atlantic and Pacific banks, small-boat sailing, and old-time shipping and seafaring.

3. The Sea Part 2
CAPTAIN A. E. DINGLE, care Authors' League of America, Aeolian Hall, New York. Such questions as pertain to the sea, ships and men, local to the U. S. should be sent to Captain Dingle, not Mr. Tucker.

4. Eastern U. S. Part 1
RAYMOND S. SPEARS, Little Falls, N. Y. Covering Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, Michigan and Hudson valleys; Great Lakes, Adirondacks, Chesapeake Bay; river, lake and road travel, game, fish and woodscraft; furs, freshwater pearls, herbs, and their markets.

5. Eastern U. S. Part 2
HAPSBURG LIEBE, Johnson City, Tenn. Covering Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and N. and S. Carolina and Georgia except Tennessee River and Atlantic seaboard. Hunting, fishing, camping; logging, lumbering, sawmilling, saws.

6. Eastern U. S. Part 3
DR. G. E. HATHORNE, 44 Central Street, Bangor, Maine. Covering Maine; fishing, hunting, canoeing, guides, outfits, supplies.

7. Western U. S. Part 1
E. E. HARRIMAN, 2303 W. 23d St., Los Angeles, Calif. Covering California, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Nevada, Arizona. Game, fur, fish; camp, cabin; mines, minerals; mountains.

8. Western U. S. Part 2
CAPT.-ADJ. JOSEPH MILLS HANSON, Yankton, S. Dak. Covering the Dakotas, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri. Hunting, fishing, travel. *Especially* early history of Missouri Valley.

9. Western U. S. Part 3 and Mexico Part 1
J. W. ROBERTSON, 912 W. Lynn Street, Austin, Texas. Covering Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and the border states of old Mexico: Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas.

10. Mexico Part 2
J. W. WHITEAKER, Cedar Park, Texas. Covering Central and Southern Mexico below a line drawn from Tampico to Mazatlan. History, geography, customs, government, animals, minerals, products and industries.

11. North American Snow Countries Part 1
ROBERT E. PINKERTON, care of Starbuck Ranch, Morrison, Colorado. Covering Minnesota, Wisconsin, Manitoba, a strip of Ontario between Minn. and C. P. R'y. Canoes and snow-shoes; methods and materials of Summer and Winter subsistence, shelter and travel, for recreation or business.

12. ★ North American Snow Countries Part 2
S. E. SANGSTER ("Canuck"), L. B. 393, Ottawa, Canada. Covering Height of Land and northern parts of Quebec and Ontario (except strip between Minn. and C. P. R'y); southeastern parts of Ungava and Keewatin. Trips for sport, canoe routes, big game, fish, fur; equipment; Summer, Autumn and Winter outfits; Indian life and habits; Hudson's Bay Co. posts; minerals, timber; customs regulations. No questions answered on trapping for profit.

13. ★ North American Snow Countries Part 3
GEORGE L. CATTON, Gravenhurst, Muskoka, Ont., Canada. Covering Southern Ontario and Georgian Bay. Fishing, hunting, trapping, canoeing.

14. North American Snow Countries Part 4
ED. L. CARSON, Arlington, Wash. Covering Yukon, British Columbia and Alberta including Peace River district; to Great Slave Lake. Outfits and equipment, guides, big game; minerals, forest, prairie; travel; customs regulations.

15. North American Snow Countries Part 5
THEODORE S. SOLOMONS, 2837 Fulton St., Berekely, Calif. Covering Alaska. Arctic life and travel; boats, packing,

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back-packing, traction, transport, routes; equipments, clothing, food; physics, hygiene; mountain work.

16. Hawaiian Islands and China
F. J. HALTON, 397 Monadnock Bldg., San Francisco, Calif. Covering customs, travel, natural history, resources, agriculture, fishing, hunting.

17. Central America
EDGAR YOUNG, Nitro, West Va. Covering Canal Zone, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, British Honduras, Salvador, Guatemala. Travel, customs, language, game, local conditions, minerals, trading.

18. The Balkans
ARTHUR D. HOWDEN SMITH, *Evening Post*, 20 Vesey St., New York City. Covering Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Turkey (in Europe); travel, sport, customs, language, local conditions, markets, industries.

19. Asia, Southern
GORDON MCCREAGH, 21 East 14th St., New York City. Covering Red Sea, Persian Gulf, India, Tibet, Burma, Western China, Siam, Andamans, Malay States, Borneo, the Treaty Ports; hunting, trading, traveling.

20. Japan and Korea
ROBERT WELLES RITCHIE, Mountain Lakes, N. J. Covering travel, hunting, customs of people, art and curios.

21. Russia and Eastern Siberia
CAPTAIN A. M. LOCHWITZKY (Formerly Lieut.-Col. I. R. A., Ret.), Quartermaster, U. S. Troops, Mercedes, Texas. Covering Petrograd and its province; Finland, Northern Caucasus; Primorsk District, Island of Sakhalin; travel, hunting, fishing; explorations among native tribes; markets, trade, curios.

22. Africa Part 1
THOMAS S. MILLER, Moss Beach, San Mateo Co., Calif. Covering the Gold, Ivory and Fever Coasts of West Africa, the Niger River from the delta to Jebba, Northern Nigeria. Canoeing, labor, trails, trade, expenses, outfitting, flora: tribal histories, witchcraft, savagery.

23. Africa Part 2
GEORGE E. HOLT, Castle View, Meriden, Conn. Covering Morocco; travel, tribes, customs, history, etc.

24. ★ Africa Part 3 Portugese East Africa
R. W. WARING, Corunna, Ontario, Canada. Covering trade, produce, climate, opportunities, game, wild life, travel, expenses, outfits, health, etc.

25. Africa Part 4 Transvaal, N. W. and Southern Rhodesia, British East Africa, Uganda, and the Upper Congo.
CHARLES BEADLE, care Paul Tausig & Son, 104 E. 14th St., New York, N. Y. Covering geography, hunting, equipment, trading, climate, mining, transport, customs, living conditions, witchcraft, opportunities for adventure and sport.

26. ★ New Zealand, Cook Islands and Samoa
TOM L. MILLS, *The Feilding Star*, Feilding, New Zealand. Covering New Zealand, Cook Islands and Samoa. Travel, history, customs; opportunities for adventurers, explorers and sportsmen.

27. Australia and Tasmania
ALBERT GOLDIE, 1106 Van Nuys Building, Los Angeles, Cal. Covering customs, resources, travel, hunting, sports, politics, history.

STANDING INFORMATION

For general information on U. S. and its possessions, write Sup't of Public Documents, Wash., D. C., for catalog of all Government publications.

For the Philippines and Porto Rico, the Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Dep't, Wash., D. C.

For Alaska, the Alaska Bureau, Chamber of Commerce, Central Bldg., Seattle, Wash.

For Hawaii, Hawaii Promotion Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Honolulu, H. I. Also, Dep't of the Interior, Wash., D. C.

For Cuba, Bureau of Information, Dep't of Agri., Com., and Labor, Havana, Cuba. Or J. V. Knight, Director, Republic of Cuba News Bureau, Woolworth Building, New York.

For Central and South America, John Barrett, Dir. Gen., Pan-American Union, Wash., D. C.

For R. N. W. M. P., Comptroller Royal Northwest Mounted Police, Ottawa, Can., or Commissioner, R. N. W. M. P., Regina, Sask. Only unmarried British subjects, age 22 to 30, above 5 ft. 8 in. and under 175 lbs., accepted.

For Canal Zone, the Panama Canal, Wash., D. C.

For U. S., its possessions and most foreign countries, the Dep't of Com., Wash., D. C.

★ (*Enclose addressed envelope with 3 cents in stamps NOT attached*)

The following Ask Adventure editors are now serving in our military forces. We hope you will be patient if their answers are at times delayed: Capt.-Adj. Joseph Mills Hanson; Capt. A. M. Lochwitzky.

Open Range Along the Peace River

Question:—"I would like some information concerning Vancouver Island as a cow and horse country, range conditions, etc. Could I run stock there without having to feed all Winter and could hay be raised? The open range in Montana will soon be gone and for a fellow who loves the open range it means get out or go to farming. Is the interior mountainous or is it mostly lowlands; how much snowfall is there? My partner and I want to get as far as possible from the settlements and railroads. We are eighty-five miles from a railroad now but the homesteaders are coming in in bunches."—H. W. D., Powderville, Montana.

Answer, by Mr. Carson:—As a range country I am afraid that Vancouver Island would prove a disappointment as the island is for the most part heavily timbered. There are beaver meadows and open patches but not to the extent required for the successful running of a large herd. In short it is more of a dairy than a stock proposition and this I judge from your letter is not what you are after.

Why not investigate the Peace River country? There is plenty of room there to spread out as far as you like and it will be years before the railway bothers you. You can homestead a quarter-section and lease from the Government for the balance of what you need at something like two cents per acre. This figure will stand investigation but I am sure I am right. The best way to go in is by way of Dunvegan, north of Edmonton, and thence to Fort St. John.

Between Mud River and Pouce Coupe River, just west of the Alberta boundary there is a stretch of real prairie about thirty-five miles long and about twenty-five miles wide. It is almost free from timber if you care to call the scrub stuff there by that name and is well covered with wild hay. It lies or rather begins about ten or twelve miles south of the Peace and is well watered. It is common knowledge that the Indians used this place as a Winter range for their horses while they went into the hills to trap, which would seem to answer the question of stock Wintering out.

There is never any snow to speak of before Christmas after which there comes about six weeks of good old snappy weather during which time in my opinion it would be a good idea to have a few stacks of hay for the stock to prowl around. Any time after the first of February the Chinook winds begin to get in their work and Spring has fairly set in by the last of March.

There are plenty of creeks along which there is a considerable growth of spruce and poplar big enough for cabins, corrals and other building purposes.

There are trout in the streams and the game is

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fairly plentiful. Rabbits of course are there in great numbers which naturally calls for the presence of foxes and lynx. Plenty of deer, quite a few bear, some moose and I am told that caribou are occasionally taken but I am inclined to think that this is a rare occurrence.

I have an idea that a man could help out the grubstake quite a lot by trapping as a side line and another thing, you will never lack for berries for it is a wonderful wild-berry country. The saskatoons are something to tell about while the strawberries are very much in evidence.

You can get a fairly good map of the country as well as a lot of valuable information by writing to the Deputy Minister of Lands, Victoria, B. C., or to R. A. MacLoed, Peace River, Alberta.

Taking it all around I do not know of any place that would suit you better and while there is naturally the difference in the length of days in Summer and nights in Winter due to the distance north I am satisfied that you will find the climate just as good as that of Montana.

Quartermasters on Ocean-Going Ships

Question:—"I am familiar with chart and compass and have had several years experience with boats but have never been employed on ocean-going steamships. Would it be possible for me to ship as a quartermaster or would I have to start as ordinary seaman and work up? What are the qualifications necessary to ship as quartermaster? Could you give me an idea of the present rate of pay? Also that of an ordinary seaman. Which do you think a man would have the best chance of working himself up in, the U. S. Merchant Marine or on a vessel owned by a steamship company?"—GEORGE L. BROWN, Stamford, Conn.

Answer, by Captain Dingle:—Your statement that you are familiar with chart and compass is scarcely sufficient data for me to answer you on. If you mean that you are an experienced seaman in sound vessels or coasters, you can surely have no trouble in shipping as seaman aboard ocean-going steamers. Familiarity with chart and compass may mean anything or nothing. Most men who spend their Summers knocking around in small yachts or even motor-boats can say they are familiar with chart and compass; but they would be useless as quartermasters on big steamers until they had learned the "hang" of a real ship.

If your experience has been that of mate or second mate of schooners, or tugs, or any craft actually navigating the sea, you can go to almost any shipping office and ship as quartermaster; but unless your experience is real experience, you must first ship as seaman, perhaps for a voyage, maybe for several, until you have convinced the master or mates of your worth as a helmsman. Then the quartermaster's berth will be opened to you quickly.

I think a quartermaster today gets about $65 per month. Seamen are getting $60, and besides the pay—I speak of the Atlantic Trade—there is over-time allowance of forty cents an hour for ship work, and fifty cents per hour for cargo work. A further allowance of $100 is given to each seaman aboard a sunk ship for loss of his personal belongings.

Personally I believe the quickest promotion is likely in the smaller vessels of private companies. The ships taken over by the Navy, and the new Mercantile Marine, sound better, and no doubt the service is more valuable; but qualified men are needed most, and I believe a man starting out now can qualify sooner on the smaller steamers down the coast or to the West Indies and Central America. But while aiming for quartermaster, why not aim still higher and train yourself for an officer?

It is not hard, and after all a quartermaster is only a seaman, though he does not have to wash decks or paint smokestacks or black rigging. He must scrub gratings, polish brasswork, holystone bridge rails, and many other things not much more joyful than the deck-hand does. At sea he stands wheel, and for the rest of the watch is a sort of adult bell-boy for the watch officer. In port he keeps gangway and runs messages. But he never is anything more than a seaman; and a man with intelligence enough to see the undesirability of a deck-hand's life has enough gumption to pass the examinations for second and first mate. But he must of course start at the bottom.

Miners and Ranch Hands in Demand

Question:—Can you give me any information as to farm labor or work in the mines in Southern California or Arizona? I am desirous of finding the best place for a young man to locate, to live permanently in the West."—J. VAN DEVENTER, Chicago, Ill.

Answer, by Mr. Harriman:—There is a lively demand for men in both industries mentioned. There has been a shortage of ranch workers that has threatened serious damage to the State. No man who has any pep need go idle here.

Anywhere in either State or any State in the West right now they are begging for ranch hands and paying better wages than were ever known. As for mines, they tell me that men are at a premium all over Arizona and parts of California.

There has been much talk of importing alien labor to meet the demand. I am nearly fifty-seven and have a game knee, but I'll bet a hundred even, that I can hire out to a farmer within the first hour after I get out of the city. Any man who is industrious can do it.

During the beet season here Mexicans were making as high as $4 a day gathering beets or thinning beets. They are paid by the piece or so much an acre for thinning and so much a ton for pulling, topping and loading. And they are the laziest things alive.

A friend of mine from Globe, Arizona, tells me that the mines need men everywhere. They are opening and running silver mines that have been idle for many years. The activity in mining is phenominal, because of high prices for all kinds of metals and chemicals.

If you should happen to want a whirl at something else, there are the sawmills and lumber camps farther north.

Chihuahua and Northern Mexico

Question:—"I would like to hear from you about Chihuahua, the country. Is there any chance for work there now?"—R. E. FIELDS, Kingston, Ga.

Answer, by Mr. Robertson:—Chihuahua is the most northeastern State of Mexico, and is one of

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the most important States in rank of mineral production. There were a large number of American-owned mines in this State at the outbreak of the revolution. There are also large properties of the Medera Lumber Company, an American company, located in this State.

Most of the mines have resumed operations on a decreased scale, on account of bandit trouble. A great many of the smaller mines have closed up and may not open for years. At one time there were thousands of Americans employed by the various mining, lumber and cattle companies.

The climate varies from one extreme to another. The country is partly desert, and partly mountainous. South of El Paso is Juarez, the leading port of entry for the north. The country is supposed to be safe as far as Chihuahua City several hundred miles to the south, though bandits are still operating along the line of the Mexico Southwestern. Below the city of Chihuahua the bandits still control the country, and make frequent raids on the railways. All the lines are guarded by Mexican soldiers. You can see that this is not a very safe country for Americans to be running around in.

One who does not speak the Mexican language and has no knowledge of their customs has not much chance in that country to-day. I do not think the day far distant though, when this country will again attract the attention of American capital; conditions will then be greatly improved and I do not think a man would have much trouble connecting with some mining company.

The Opportunities in Australia

Question:—"Two of us are going to Australia in the Spring. One of us is a chef, the other an engineer and auto mechanic. What are the customs of the people and living conditions there? What are the chances for farming or sheep-raising? How much is the fare from San Francisco to Sydney?"—A. HANSSON, Martinez, Cal.

Answer, by Mr. Goldie:—Living conditions in Australia are as pleasant as in any part of the world. The climate in the coastal cities is equable and mostly agreeable, the heat of Summer being tempered by cool sea breezes while inland the heat is dry and easily bearable on the few days of the year when it reaches one hundred degrees in the shade. The cost of living is about the same as that in California and in fact there is a great similarity in conditions generally between this State and the principal States of Australia—New South Wales and Victoria.

The chances for farming or sheep-raising are always good in Australia depending on the amount of capital you are prepared to invest and the class of land you acquire. At present there is a large over-production of both wheat and wool owing to the difficulty in securing ships to move these commodities. The British Government has, however, relieved producers from any loss on this account by purchasing crops and clips at good prices.

If as I judge you are men of small capital desirous of seeing a quick return for your money I would advise you to take up small farming near the city of Sydney where there is a great demand for fruit, vegetables, eggs, poultry, etc. These small mixed farms near Sydney are yielding big incomes and to my personal knowledge there are many who are making from $1,200 to $3,000 per annum from two or three acres of land by producing the class of commodities I have just mentioned. Land suitable for such a purpose can be obtained within twenty miles of Sydney from $200 to $500 per acre according to the distance from the railway station. The terms of purchase are extremely easy—in fact I believe that land can be purchased on the instalment plan in Australia on better terms than anywhere in the world.

Life near Sydney—say from fifteen to twenty-five miles—is extremely pleasant and you can commute on the Government railways from these distances at about fifty cents to eighty cents per week respectively. Sydney is an excellent market for the commodities mentioned above, the prevailing prices for vegetables and fruit being higher than in this country. If you wish any information regarding wheat-growing or sheep-raising I would have to know on what scale you are prepared to take up these industries as conditions vary greatly.

But if the small mixed farm appeals to you I would advise you to communicate with Arthur Rickard, 84 Pitt St., Sydney, who controls many big tracts of country around Sydney and who could give you every information. Mention my name and I am sure he will give you much personal attention as he is prominent in the immigration movement and likes to encourage newcomers.

The fare from San Francisco to Sydney is first class $225, second class $150.

The Muskoka District

Question:—"I would like to settle in the Muskoka or Perry Sound Districts and have heard that homesteads can still be obtained there, also a number of partly improved lots which have been vacated. Can you give me any information on this? I am at present in a military hospital. With my pension, raising chickens and some garden stuff, and catching a little fish and game I think I could manage nicely. I am used to bush life having lived eight years at Cochrane, but found the weather there too severe."—CORP. J. W. VARNSVERRY, Whitby, Ont.

Answer, by Mr. Catton:—There is not much difference in the weather between the District of Muskoka and the Temiskaming— wherein Cochrane is located. We have had as low as fifty-three degrees below zero here this Winter, and last Summer we had but two months—middle of June till the middle of August—without frost; both temperatures were rather exceptional, however.

There are, I know, quite a number of "reported" partly improved lots in this district; but just where they are I am unable to say. Also there are several Free Grant Townships that are open for homesteading, where you can homestead one hundred and sixty acres. Your plan is a good one. Write Mr. H. A. Macdonell, director of colonization, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, for full information on homesteading; and to Mr. J. B. Brown, Bracebridge, Muskoka, for information concerning the Free Grant Townships in the district here.

The Young Man and Alaska

Question:—"I am a young man, 18 years of age, I am interested in going to Alaska to work and save my money. Does Alaska offer a young man a

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better opportunity than the Western U. S.? What are the wages now paid lumberjacks in Alaska? Could I hire out as a lumberjack if I were to go to Alaska? What kind of an outfit should I take, and would I have to pay duty on it? Where can I get a list of the articles on which duty must be paid? What kind of work is mostly in Fairbanks and Nome, and is there any way in which I could work my way up to these cities? Could two young men make any profit in hunting and trapping? What kind of work do you think I should start in with?"—NICHOLAS VERNEL, JR., Lorain, Ohio.

Answer, by Mr. Solomons:—You have written me a very methodical, business-like letter and I shall try to write you as good a one in return, bearing in mind my responsibility in advising so young a man on so serious a matter.

I should answer your first question emphatically in the affirmative: Alaska does offer a better opportunity than the Western United States to a young man, provided! Provided he has sterling and Spartan—almost—qualities. If he is weak, he had best stay out of Alaska. Weak in will and moral strength, I mean. There is isolation from congenial associates, often, and men are rough and mixed with the riff-raff of the earth; but of course there are many fine, strong men, too. At your age you could learn Alaska as you worked, and then, as time went on you could take advantage of its steadily developing opportunities for getting hold of its resources and turning them into a competence or wealth. The chances are there, and it would be "up to you." This is merely more true of Alaska than of the West in general. So much for the whole outlook.

Coming down to your specific questions, Alaska is healthy and you would develop physically. Alaska is not, as yet, much of a lumbering region, and the lumberjack is the occasional man and not an industrial institution. There are just a few small mills here and there, though on the extreme southwest end there are quite a number. That is hardly Alaska so much as British Columbia, however. Better think about general labor, and mining work in particular. You would not have to pay duty on your outfit, because Alaska is your own country, and the outfit you ought to take would fit nicely into a large suit-case or small trunk. After you have made a list of an "outfit" such as men used to take into Alaska and figured it up, the next thing to do is to destroy the list and convert the money into a draft on some Alaska bank.

LOST TRAILS

NOTE—We offer this department of the "Camp-Fire" free of charge to those of our readers who wish to get in touch again with old friends or acquaintances from whom the years have separated them. For the benefit of the friend you seek, *give your own name if possible.* All inquiries along this line, unless containing contrary instructions, will be considered as intended for publication in full with inquirer's name, in this department, at our discretion. We reserve the right, in case inquirer refuses his name, to substitute any numbers or other names, to reject any item that seems to us unsuitable, and to use our discretion in all matters pertaining to this department. Give also your own full address. We will, however, forward mail through this office, assuming no responsibility therefor. We have arranged with the Montreal *Star* to give additional publication in their "Missing Relative Column," weekly and daily editions, to any of our inquiries for persons last heard of in Canada.

ADVENTURE HAS FOUND ONE MAN OUT OF EVERY FIVE ASKED FOR DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS

VREELAND. (Father). H. G. Vreeland, Jr., would like to get in touch with my father, last heard of in Memphis, Tenn., and was working for the Government as a dredge-boat engineer. Last seen he had black hair, mustache and goatee. Weighed about 180 pounds, dark complexion and about 5 feet 8 inches in height. Both sons are in the Army. Notify E. E. VREELAND, Co. "E", 15th Ammunition Train, Fort Bliss, Texas.

GRIFFIN, TOM. Last heard of in Brooklyn August 15, 1917. Left forwarding address Tulsa, Oklahoma. Short, stocky, red hair, about 48 years old, first joint of finger off, lump or scar on forehead right over one of his eyes. Any information regarding him would be appreciated by his son.—Address JOE. P. GRIFFIN, 2706 Beverly Road, Brooklyn.

PARK, JOHN P. Father. A native of New Orleans. Printer, about 50 years of age in 1893, at which time he was employed on the Nashville *Banner*. Red haired in youth, but very grizzled in later years. Lost one eye, and was known to companions as "One-Eyed Parks." About 6 feet in height, somewhat stooped.—Address GEORGE PARKE, 207 N. Galena Ave., Dixon, Illinois.

Please notify us at once when you have found your man.

MCKAY, FLORENCE. Last heard of in Montreal, Canada, in 1898 or 1900. Was rather tall, dark eyes, dark brown hair, had dimples in cheeks, walked fast then and was 18 or 19 years old. I am anxious to hear of her.—Address MRS. CLARA SMITH, Care of MRS. TORRENCE, 855 West Monroe St., Chicago, Illinois.

RUTSTEIN, JOE, brother. Last heard from 10 years ago. He was then employed by the Barnum & Bailey Circus. Kindly communicate with—Address ISRAEL J. E. RUTSTEIN, Supply Co., 57th Infantry, Houston, Texas.

KING, RODRICK BARLO, son. Age 18, December 11, 1917. Tall, dark; large for his age, dark brown hair, hazel eyes, good looking, jolly. Last heard from October 27, 1916, at San Diego, Calif.—Address MRS. GUY C. KING, 3729 65th St., S. E., Portland, Oregon.

DANKEL, HENRY. Last heard of in Butte, Montana, or thereabouts, last of 1900, or first of 1901. About 42 years of age, rather tall and heavy. Father died last August, and estate is to settle.—Address WILLIAM DANKEL, Villa Grove, Illinois, or JOHN C. DANKEL, 160 Mercer St., Seattle, Washington.

HORNIFER, GUS. Last heard of you in Illinois in 1913. You liked to work on motors. Am in auto repair business now. Remember Hurculainium, Missouri, and our wild runaway trip down the Mississippi? Write to me.—Address LONNIE CONRAD, 1415 West Pico St., Los Angeles, California.

Inquiries will be printed three times, then taken out. In the February issue all unfound names asked for during the past two years will be reprinted alphabetically.

HILLIARD, LEON. Formerly of Strafford, Vt. Last heard from in 1904, was then in Norwich, Vt. Please write to GUY C. ROSS, 31 Bridge St., Northampton, Mass.

BRANDEL, JACK. Was a private in Company "H" of 12th Infantry, N. Y. National Guard. Was at McAllen, Texas, with the regiment at time of Mexican trouble. Please write. Important.—Address HARRY GOLDBERG, 46 Orchard St., Tarrytown, N. Y.

KING, VANCE HERALD, son. Left home at age of 14; is now 24. He is dark, tall, gray eyes; parted hair on left side, dark brown hair; scar on corner of mouth, and one like small rope on upper lip.—Address MRS. GUY C. KING, 3729 65th St., S. E. Portland, Oregon.

SANDS, CLIFFORD W. Last heard of stationed with National Guard in Southern California on Mexican border. Would like to know his whereabouts. Urgent.—Address HARRISON F. LEONARD, 120 East Gray St., Louisville, Kentucky.

LEWIS, CLAYTON J. Age 52, of dark complexion and medium height, last known in Providence, R. I., 17 years ago. Any information will be greatly appreciated.—Address F. L. LEWIS, 72 Russell St., Worcester, Mass.

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FISHER, WILLIAM WRIGHT, father. Age 60, height 5 feet 9 inches, white, curly hair, blue eyes. Last heard of in Los Angeles in newspaper work.—Address DOROTHY FISHER, Y. M. C. A., 248 Dufferia St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

BARGERY, WILLIAM, brother-in-law. Went to Canada ten years ago being last heard of in Winnipeg in 1913 when he said he was going to the gold mines or fields.—Address WILLIAM KELLY, 110 Falkner St., off Myrtle St., Liverpool, England.

HAINZE, EUGENE, or HEINCZE, brother. About 28 years old, speaks three or four different languages and was born in Trieste, Austria. Last heard from six years ago.—Address FRANK J. HAINZE, Co. "B", 5th Reg. U. S. Engineers, Corpus Christi, Texas.

TODD, THEODORE W., brother. Son of Wm. E. Todd of Detroit. Last heard from by mother about 20 years ago. All are dead, left "Sis" alone.—Address MRS. IDA T. CHANDLER, 74 Columbia St., W., Detroit, Michigan.

DATTLE, ARTHUR. Last heard from a year ago March. Had intentions of enlisting in Navy. Please communicate with your old pal. Important.—Address HARRY GOLDBERG, 46 Orchard St., Tarrytown, N. Y.

AUBREY. Write sister EDITH at Fox, Arkansas.

LUCAS, JO. (Address unknown.) Condition for travel now improved. Let well enough alone.—Address LUCINDA LUCAS, Cincinnati, Ohio.

MCINNES, FRANK J. Last heard from in Darien, Ga., about 36 years ago. At that time was keeper of a pilot boat office there. His sister would like very much to hear from him.—Address MRS. JOSEPH N. MACDONALD, Sauris, P. E. Island, Canada. Box 72.

ROGERSON, WM. L. Left for South America last Winter. Did you get there? Write to your old pal. —Address SERGEANT GUY M. SHEPHERD, 668th Aero Squadron, Kelly Field, So. San Antonio, Texas.

PENDERGRASS, C. F., brother. Last heard from in Pittsboro, Pa., 22 years old, weight 150, light hair, blue eyes, fair complexion. Any information as to his whereabouts will be appreciated.—Address W. C. PENDERGRASS, Newport News, Va.

THE following have been inquired for in full in either the Mid-May or First June issues of *Adventure*. They can get name of inquirer from this magazine:

BRIGMAN, B. F.; Carroll, James W.; Castle, Edward Moses; Chamberlain, Carl D.; Gilch; Copp, Ed.; Cranston, Arthur W.; Cross, Horace Keith; Curtiss, Marion; Daniel, John B.; Ellis, Lloyd W.; Gilmore, Edw. E.; Harmon, H. E.; Karoko, Peter; Kelly, R. E.; Kleinle, Erving Louis; Kline, Paul A.; McCord, John; McNaulty, Francis; Menk, William; Mirovoye, John; Moomaw, Arthur and Eugene Moomaw; Nelson, Earl; Nuzum, John; Ohare, Rose; Poynter, Louis; Shannon, William; Shannon, James; Sharrock, Joseph P.; Slavin, Corp. J. Dallas; Smith, George; Stroman, Edwin F. (Chey); Weil, Gustav; Young, A. C.; Young, William McKinley.

MISCELLANEOUS—MacBournie, Ernest, Aubrey, Eddie, Gordon, Frank and Hattie.

HASTLAR GAL BREATH, Ruth Gilfillan, Lee Hays.—JACK P. ROBINSON.

NUMBERS L. T. 284, C. 293, W. 311, W. 312, L. T. 343. Please send us your present address. Letters forwarded to you at addresses given us do not reach you.—Address HARRY ERWIN WADE, care *Adventure*.

THE TRAIL AHEAD

In addition to the two stories mentioned on page 2, the First July Number, out on June 3, will include:

La Paloma *By Frederick J. Liesmann*

Trooper Allan had mixed it with breeds for thirty years —skirmished against *Sitting Bull* and *Aguinaldo*. But his brushes had been with more men, not women, and particularly not *La Paloma*.

His Wonders to Perform *By Gordon Young*

Missionaries cowardly! *"Lean Jake" Brundage* will never believe it. For he had been with *Captain "Bull" Greeger* and *Father Meyton* at Triblayt—the island of devil-devils and cannibals.

The Pass of Blood *By Farnham Bishop and Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur*

Again the *Lady Fulvia* of Rocca Forte. This time she keeps her appointment with *Hugo of Corleone* at the Pass of Blood.

The Idol of "It" *By Charles Beadle*

Africa—the dark, deep, mysterious. "It" penetrates the skin of *Carl Pieters*, the white trader, until the arrival of *Chesters* and his idol.

The Bully of the Big Santee *By Hapsburg Liebe*

"Slim Jack" Bewley had a mission in coming to the Little Piegan River country logging-camp. One in which *"Grizzly" McMasters* is vitally concerned. A Tennessee story.

The Immaculate Murder *By Octavus Roy Cohen and Eric Levison*

At best murders are mussy affairs. But here's a different one. Between the U. S. S. *Springfield* liberty party, *Acosta Larguia* and the "treasure box," the Buenos Aires vigilantes find things humming at a great rate.

When Jim Came Into His Own *By Lotta Adele Gannett*

"Bull" Graham was a scrapper. So he couldn't understand why his son Jim wouldn't fight. But *Patience, Bull's* wife, knew her son better than he did.

A Regular Rounder *By Russell A. Boggs*

At first Star City and Wolf Creek were ordinary cow-and-mining towns. But Star City's oil boom aroused Wolf Creek's enmity—hot as long as it lasted.

Staggering Steve *By Theodore Seixas Solomons*

No back-packer ever carried heavier loads than did *Staggering Steve*. But modern modes of transportation in Alaska were unknown, and gold makes men do arduous tasks willingly.

Red Acadia *By J. U. Giesy*

In the last instalment of this stirring Indian story, *White Wolf* completes his quest—and settles a little affair with *Elliott*.

FIRST JULY ADVENTURE

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IN THE OLD WEST
THE LION HUNTER
FIRST THROUGH THE GRAND CANYON
CAPTIVES AMONG THE INDIANS
ADRIFT IN THE ARCTIC ICE PACK
CASTAWAYS AND CRUSOES
HOBART PASHA
WILD LIFE IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS
ADVENTURES IN MEXICO

INTO the wilderness where no white man had ever been before, went George Cumming, the Lion Hunter. His only companions were a few black drunkards; his stores were small; he had only old-fashioned muzzle-loaded rifles. Often he only wounded the fiercest animals and then it was a fight for his own life. So great was his courage and daring, the story of it spread over the world. Wherever he went people were eager to know him and hear about his narrow escapes. Here is the story of his exploits just as they happened, as he told of them day by day in his diary that he carried with him into Africa. Read the story of the missionary who became a Real Robinson Crusoe on a desert island—of the Englishman who ran the blockade in the South during the Civil War and finally became the head of the Turkish Navy and commanded it during the War with Russia. Read nine volumes of tales like these—tales of high hearts and lofty courage, of cool heads and hot blood—nine volumes—and all true.

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List of Titles

- In the Old West
- Castaways and Crusoes
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- First Through the Grand Canyon
- Adrift in the Arctic Ice-Pack
- The Lion Hunter
- Hobart Pasha
- Adventures in Mexico
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